
Interfaith Cooperation to Promote Human Values

MWL honored with Interfaith Award

The Makkah Charter Promotes Global Unity and Coexistence

A Year of Promoting Tolerance and Harmony



**PROMOTING
HUMAN VALUES**



The Charter of Makkah was once considered a unifying document that would bind Muslims worldwide to a relationship with their faith that is tolerant and that rejects recent false interpretations of Islam as a harsh, austere and joyless form of faith. ”



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The Muslim World League Journal

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Muslim World League

Recent Activities in Review



Dr. Al-Issa hosted Joey Hood, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, where they discussed the critical role of interfaith dialogue and cooperation in fostering coexistence, building bridges of understanding and advancing peace around the world.

In Washington, D.C, Dr. Al-Issa met with U.S. Congresswoman Teresa Fernandez, who holds a leadership position in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and serves as Chair of the Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples.



Dr. Al-Issa met with Mr. Adam Phillips, the Director of the Center for Faith-Based & Neighborhood Partnerships in the U.S. Agency for International Development. They discussed methods to increase cooperation and reviewed prospects to jointly address public health and economic issues.





Dr. Al-Issa hosted the U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Mr. Daniel Benaim, who praised MWL's efforts in building bridges between peoples and civilizations.

Dr. Al-Issa hosted a delegation that included the Director of Johns Hopkins University's Center for Injury Research and Policy, Dr. Shannon Frattaroli; Dr. Caleb Alexander, Co-Director of the JHU Center for Drug Safety and Effectiveness; and Bawa Jain, the Secretary-General of the Centre for Responsible Leadership. They discussed areas of cooperation to protect young people from addiction.



Dr. Al-Issa met with a group of Islamic leaders from around the United States, including His Eminence Sayyid Mohammad Baqir Al-Kashmiri, His Eminence Sheikh Dr. Rasul Naqvi, Sheikh Muhammad Majid, and Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Senussi.





Dr. Al-Issa hosted the President of the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, Ambassador Douglas Silliman. For a wide-ranging discussion of issues of common interest.

Dr. Al-Issa was awarded the Norwegian Bridge Builder Award in a ceremony at the Oslo Opera House. The award cited his exceptional and tangible contribution to building bridges of understanding between followers of different religions and civilizations.



Dr. Al-Issa met with the Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Neil Crompton.





The Declaration of Makkah was conceived and brought to fruition by the Muslim World League in 2019 in a conference of Islamic leaders and scholars, in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. Its purpose was to codify a set of progressive principles that stemmed from Islamic teaching and would bind all Muslims to a philosophy of tolerance.

The charter condemns extremism, exalts religious tolerance and cultural diversity, and supports the adoption of laws that would criminalize hate and severely punish acts of hate-based violence. It was approved by Islamic leaders of 139 countries and signed by around 1,200 prominent Muslim figures.

From the beginning, the Charter of Makkah was directed at Muslims. It brought together the leading Islamic scholars of the world, representing all sects of Islam, to affirm the long-standing teachings and traditions of the faith, especially as regards to the treatment of one's fellow human beings.

"God revealed Himself to all mankind and is the origin of all religious belief," reads one principle of the Charter, "its various messages and methods, when practiced in their true form. We shall not define any religion by the false political practices of those claiming to be adherents."

It brought the full weight of Islamic theological and scholarly authority to bear against the radicalization of Islam and the senseless violence that it spawned. It embraced the idea that Islam could embrace a diversity of expressions and sects within a framework that accepted basic teachings of the faith. No one sect with-

in Islam would represent "true" faith. And it specifically rejected the idea that anyone could declare himself an authority and issue fatwahs and public interpretations of Islam.

"Only learned scholars such as those gathered at this Conference and agreeing to this Charter can speak in the name of the Muslim Ummah," reads the first sentence of the last principle of the Charter, "or any matter pertaining to its affairs."

It soon became clear, as MWL Secretary General Dr. Al-Issa traveled the world engaging with leaders of other faiths that the principles of the Charter of Makkah were universal. Some were clearly so, as its declaration that any attack on a place of worship was a crime. It upheld principles of charity, tolerance, environmental stewardship and the dignity and equality of women.

The Charter of Makkah was once considered a unifying document that would bind Muslims worldwide to a relationship with their faith that is tolerant and that rejects recent false interpretations of Islam as a harsh, austere and joyless form of faith. It is now a document that can bind all faith communities toward understanding, respect and love.

In this issue, we highlight some of the ways the Charter of Makkah is being transformed from a document of principles to a blueprint for action. As we go forward to build tolerance and understanding, we go forth with the spirit of Allah in our hearts and the Charter of Makkah in our hand.

The Editors





In New York, Dr. Al-Issa met with António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Interfaith Cooperation to Promote Human Values

In October, Dr. Al-Issa made his first visit to the United States since the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The MWL Secretary-General met with religious and community leaders, think tanks and scholars, and

government officials. They discussed the implementation of the Charter of Makkah, the need for further interfaith cooperation and partnership in the fight to combat extremism, intolerance, and discrimination, and the pro-



UN Chief and MWL SG discuss international efforts to confront hatred and promote interreligious peace and dialogue

motion of shared human values to advance peace and harmony.

Meeting with the UN Secretary General and Ambassador Lauder

Known for his commitment to rebuilding relations between Muslims and Jews and combating antisemitism, MWL Secretary-General Dr. Al-Issa met with representatives of several Jewish institutions and organizations. In New York, Dr. Al-Issa and Ambassador Ronald Lauder, the President of the World Jewish

Congress (WJC), met with UN Secretary-General António Guterres. They discussed the crucial interfaith work being done by the MWL and WJC, shared plans to continue to promote tolerance worldwide, ways to combat extremism and protect houses of worship for all faiths.

“The world is under threat from pernicious individuals and groups that seek to use hatred, violence, and discrimination to target Muslims, Jews, and many other global communities. Fortunately, however, we are seeing



UN Chief Guterres receives MWL Secretary General Dr. Al-Issa at the UN headquarters in New York City

interfaith partnerships blossom more than ever before as we unite to fight the scourge of racism and extremism, and build bridges of tolerance, understanding, peace, and harmony,” said Dr. Al-Issa during the meeting.

Conveying their vision to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Dr. Al-Issa, and Ambassador Lauder emphasized the unique power of religion to unite individuals under common values of peace and mercy.

Engagement with Holocaust Survivors

Dr. Al-Issa met with a group of Holocaust sur-

vivors and listened to their stories of struggle, pain and ultimate triumph. During the meeting, the MWL Secretary-General expressed his immense admiration for their courage and noted that their willingness to share their experiences acts as a constant and powerful reminder that we must never allow the kinds of atrocities committed during the Holocaust to be repeated.

Event with Yeshiva University

New York’s Yeshiva University welcomed Dr. Al-Issa to participate in “Jews and Muslims: A Look Toward the Future,” which was the inaugural program of its Presidential forum



In Washington D.C., Dr. Al-Issa met with U.S. Congresswoman Teresa Fernandez, who holds a leadership position in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and serves as Chair of the Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples.

conversation series, in which Yeshiva President Rabbi Ari Berman engages with global leaders. The event was conducted in association with the Rabbi Arthur Schneier Program for International Affairs of Yeshiva University, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and the American Sephardi Federation.

After a private lunch that included close friends of Yeshiva University, Rabbi Berman and Dr. Al-Issa sat down to discuss the growing relationships between Muslim and Jewish communities across the globe before a contingent of faculty, staff, and students from

Yeshiva College, Sy Syms School of Business, the Graduate Program in Advanced Talmudic Studies for Women, the Yeshiva University High School for Girls-Central, and the Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy/Yeshiva University High School for Boys.

Yeshiva University also recognized Dr. Al-Issa for his unwavering dedication to promoting tolerance, mutual respect and interfaith cooperation. During the event, Yeshiva University's President, Rabbi Berman, hailed Dr. Al-Issa's efforts to rebuild the historical relationship between Muslims and Jews through engaging and educating the next generation of Jewish



Dr. Al-Issa also welcomed a number of American evangelical leaders in Washington, D.C. to review the contents of the Charter of Makkah and its purpose to establish community and global harmony.

and Muslim leaders. Participants included prominent Jewish leaders, faculty, and students at Yeshiva University's campus in New York.

World Philosophy Day

To commemorate World Philosophy Day, the Muslim World League, in cooperation with UNESCO, Columbia University and the American Sephardi Federation, organized a forum on Islamic values and shared religious philosophies. The event also highlighted historical contributions by Muslims, which included the Muslim World League's Charter of Makkah.

After a series of successful meetings in New York City, Dr. Al-Issa headed to the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., to deepen his engagement with local political and religious leaders.

Meeting with Representative Teresa Fernandez

In the nation's capital, the MWL's Secretary-General met with Congresswoman Teresa Fernandez, who holds a leadership position on the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and serves as Chair of the Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples. The two discussed the



Dr. Al-Issa and American evangelical leaders in Washington, D.C.

importance of working together to combat intolerance, discrimination, and racism in all its forms.

Meeting with Religious and Local Leaders

Subsequently, Dr. Al-Issa welcomed American evangelical leaders in Washington to review the contents of the Charter of Makkah and its purpose to establish a true sense of community and global harmony. In Washington, he also met with American muftis, imams and other Muslim leaders to discuss issues confronting Islam and preparations to enact the contents of the Charter of Makkah within

societal and official frameworks.

In separate meetings, Dr. Al-Issa sat down with African-American Muslim leaders to discuss how to combat racism and discrimination and implement the principles of the Charter of Makkah.

Event at Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Al-Issa hosted a delegation of leaders from the Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health, Professor Shannon Frattaroli and Dr. Caleb Alexander, and the Secretary-General of the Centre for

Responsible Leadership, Bawa Jain. They discussed areas of cooperation to protect young people from addiction. This engagement followed previous virtual events and engagements among the different organizations.

Event for Implementation of the Charter of Makkah

During his visit to Washington, Dr. Alissa participated in the first forum of the Charter of Makkah. The event, titled “Makkah Charter for Promoting Global Unity and Coexistence: Interfaith Cooperation for Security, Health and Development,” was organized by major Islamic and non-Muslim religious institutions from across the country.

The forum gathered high-ranking participants, including executive director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, Melissa Rogers, and a group of political and intellectual leaders, think tanks and research centers, and many other notable religious groups and academic figures.

The opening plenary session was followed by several religious freedom workshops and focused on interreligious cooperation and the role religion can play in responding to crises and eradicating social issues among minorities. The event’s participants received a presentation on the executive planning of the Charter of Makkah, which is based on the higher purposes of Islamic law and embraces the United Nations’ sustainable development goals. The common principles include promoting the fundamental issues of justice, peace, and coexistence while eradicating poverty, violence, and environmental degradation.

Meeting with State Department Officials

In several individual meetings, Dr. Al-Issa met

with senior State Department officials, including Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Joey Hood, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Arabian Peninsula Affairs Daniel Benaim, and Director of the Office of International Religious Freedom Daniel Nadel. During each meeting, Dr. Al-Issa discussed the critical role of interfaith dialogue and cooperation in fostering coexistence, building bridges of understanding, and advancing peace worldwide. The State Department officials highlighted the vital role the MWL and Dr. Al-Issa play in bridging divides between peoples and civilizations.

Other Meetings with Interreligious Leaders

During his stay in the U.S. capital, Dr. Al-Issa concluded several other meetings with senior representatives of different religions. He visited the Washington National Cathedral to meet with its leadership, including the Very Reverend Dean Randolph Hollerith. They discussed the importance of working together across faiths and communities to foster more peaceful coexistence and understanding.

Additionally, Dr. Al-Issa met with a group of Islamic leaders from around the country, including Sayyid Mohammad Baqir Al-Kashmiri, Sheikh Dr. Rasul Naqvi, Sheikh Muhammad Majid, and Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Senussi. They discussed the importance of interfaith cooperation and understanding within the Muslim community in the U.S. and worldwide.

Dr. Al-Issa’s busy program of meetings in the U.S. gave him the opportunity to press his commitment to interreligious dialogue and encourage more active participation by others. Many of these engagements have already borne fruit, with plans for more joint efforts to strengthen the fight against extremism and promote common human values beyond geographical, cultural, and religious borders.



Muslim World League Convenes Sunni and Shiite leaders from Iraq in Makkah to Bridge the Divide.

The Charter of Makkah: Global Implementation for a Global Vision

In 2021, the Muslim World League led and participated in high-impact conferences around the world to raise global awareness of the vision laid out in the Charter of Makkah, and to take practical steps to ensure its implementation.

In June, The MWL facilitated the signing of the Declaration of Peace in Afghanistan during a conference in Makkah for senior Pakistani and Afghan scholars sponsored by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. By encouraging negotiations among various factions, the MWL took a concrete step in the spirit of the

Charter of Makkah to ease tensions, reject violence, and foster coexistence. Distinguished participants included Sheikh Dr. Noor Al-Haq Qadri, Pakistan’s Minister of Islamic Affairs and Tolerance of Religions, and Sheikh Mohammed Qasim Halimi, Afghanistan’s Minister of Hajj, Endowments and Guidance.

Dr. Al-Issa highlighted during the forum that “This blessed sponsorship and great support by Saudi Arabia’s government comes in line with the Kingdom’s extensive Islamic work, as part of its Islamic duties and responsibilities.” The conference brought the true peaceful



Senior Islamic scholars from Afghanistan and Pakistan convene with the MWL ahead of historic Afghan peace declaration.

message of Islam to the forefront during a tumultuous year for Afghanistan.

In August, the Muslim World League convened the “Forum of Iraqi References” with eighty prominent Iraqi Sunni and Shiite religious leaders and scholars to promote unity and reconciliation around the threads that connect all Muslims, regardless of their sect, nationality, or ethnicity. The religious leaders went beyond verbal agreements and developed a framework on the roles of scholars in combating sectarianism and religious extremism, promoting interfaith coexistence, and providing support to Iraqi government efforts to achieve a lasting peace. Consensus emerged to plan and create a new high-level permanent commission for cooperation on Iraqi Islamic affairs. The commission will focus on outreach both domestically and

throughout the Ummah and to other faiths, and the leaders agreed to establish a new coordination committee that will serve as a direct platform to allow religious leaders to resolve disagreements within Iraq before they escalate. In this way, leaders are focusing the universal values of the Charter of Makkah on the local context of sectarian tensions in Iraq.

In September, Dr. Al-Issa delivered remarks on global health at a World Health Organization Summit in Geneva, stating that Islamic values should serve as a main driver to combat the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretary General outlined to global health leaders in Geneva that contributions to the pandemic by the MWL included “material aid in direct coordination with governments, as well as medical equipment for health institutions and food aid for vulnerable groups.”



Secretary General Mohammed Dr. Al-Issa in Geneva Outlining MWL's Support to Global Health Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

The MWL's relief during the pandemic has been in line with the Charter of Makkah's mandate to foster a world in which we can cooperate effectively across borders to solve humanity's challenges in a peaceful fashion.

In October, Dr. Al-Issa attended a meeting on the Paris Peace and Solidarity Agreement and supported an action plan to promote peace and harmony among national societies. The practical discussion in Paris was a concrete step toward the goals laid out in the Charter of Makkah to avoid needless conflicts and cooperate and come together for global stability.

In November, the MWL hosted the first International Forum of the Charter of Makkah in Washington, which brought together Muslim and non-Muslim faith leaders from various

American states to reflect on the practical implementation of the Charter. Participants included the executive director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, Melissa Rogers, as well as religious, political and academic leaders from throughout the United States. The Forum delved into details of the executive plan for the Charter of Makkah and its alignment with sustainable development goals of the UN and global community. The Forum served to raise awareness of the spirit of true Islam in the United States and create an international consensus to continue living and working together in the spirit of the Charter of Makkah even as the world struggles with a pandemic and political instability in the Middle East.



Dr. Al-Issa was presented with the Bridge Builder Award at the Opera Hall in Oslo.

MWL honored with Interfaith Award

Last month, Dr. Al-Issa was presented with the Bridge Builder Award in a ceremony at the Opera Hall in Oslo. The award recognizes Muslim, Christian, and Jewish peacemakers for their outstanding contributions in building bridges across religions and leaders who stand together to make the world a better place. During the awards ceremony, Dr. Al-Issa was described as a leading global force in moderate Islam and a key figure in the fight against extremist ideology. He was also praised as a clear and distinct voice for peace

and reconciliation, for respect, equality and harmony between nations and religions.

“Every day, I strive to build bridges that connect nations, peoples and societies by demonstrating that there’s much more that unites us than divides us,” said Dr. Al-Issa. “I am deeply honored to receive this award alongside Pastor Sauca and Rabbi Melchior, whose actions represent this very ideal. The road may seem long and daunting, but we must never give in to those who seek to divide us. It is our duty



Dr. Al-Issa received the Norwegian Bridge Builder Award.

to work together to foster greater understanding, coexistence and harmony among all people of the world.”

The Bridge Builder Award also recognized Rev. Dr. Ioan Sauca, acting general secretary of the World Council of Churches, who leads a community of churches worldwide representing 500 million Christians in more than 110 countries. For decades, WCC has worked purposefully to build trust and respect for other faiths and to develop interfaith cooperation.

In accepting his award, Dr. Sauca said, “We are aware that almost all the world’s steepest challenges have an interreligious dimension. Whether we are addressing international affairs, the environment, global economic justice, the rights of women and children, racism,

the needs of refugees, and not least the task of theological education within our churches, in all these and other aspects of our work we seek to keep today’s interreligious realities in mind.”

Michael Melchior, chief rabbi and leader of the Religious Peace Initiative in Israel, former Deputy Foreign Minister of Israel and Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, was the third honoree. Today, he is a leading advocate of social justice in Israel, education for all, Jewish-Arab reconciliation and coexistence, protection of the environment and relations between Israel and the diaspora.

It was an honor for the Muslim World League and Dr. Al-Issa to receive an award that recognizes and encourages the important work of

strengthening tolerance for inequality, respect and love, values that are common and strongly rooted in the three religions. The awarding Committee believes that the three religious leaders are role models in building bridges between religions, people and nations.

Norway's former Prime Minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, led the awards ceremony in the iconic Opera building in Oslo, and the president of the 14th August committee, Aamir Javed Sheikh, presented the awards.

During his welcoming remarks, Aamir Javed Sheikh said that this is not and has never been a battle of Jews against Christians, Christians against Muslims or Muslims against Jews. "But this has been a struggle between us who want to stand together and build bridges, and those who want to create divisions and hatred between us," said Sheikh. "It is our job to fight for a world that sees you for who you are and not just the God you worship."

Several hundred prominent guests attended the ceremony, and for the first time in Norway's history, the ambassadors to Norway from Israel, Palestine and Saudi Arabia were gathered under one roof. It was also the first time that high-ranking representatives of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith communities had gathered to mark respect and tolerance for each other and with a clear ambition for further interfaith cooperation.

"The time is right for sending a clear message of peace to the world, about the importance of working together with respect, love and tolerance for our differences, the way it is anchored in the three monotheistic religions," the jury stated while announcing the award.

The Bridge Builder Award has been presented to leaders who have made valuable contributions in relation to bridge building between people, religions, and cultures while simultaneously reducing the distance between people from different backgrounds in the world.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization, praised the winners of the Bridge Builder Award and said during his closing, "COVID-19 has highlighted just how important it is that the global community works to promote peace and understanding." He continued, "The pandemic has exposed the fault lines in our world and deepened divisions. If there's one lesson we have learned, it's the lesson of interconnectedness."

Former recipients include Malala Yusufzai, H.M. King Harald of Norway, Angelina Jolie, Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau, former United States President Barack Obama, former President of Pakistan Muhammad Rafiq Tarar, and former Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg.



Dr. Al-Issa was described as a leading global force in moderate Islam and a key figure in the fight against extremist ideology. He was also praised as a clear and distinct voice for peace and reconciliation, for respect, equality and harmony between nations and religions. "



The MWL strives for the world to come together in order to face a common challenge, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reflecting on COVID relief

Islam prescribes a specific role for the state in protecting an individual's health, based on the core principle stated directly in the Quran that the right to life applies to every human being: "If anyone slays a human being...it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; and if anyone saves a human life, it shall be as though he had saved all mankind." (5:23)

The Muslim World League strives to maintain this Islamic tradition of health as a human right by focusing its support toward the most vulnerable communities across the world. As COVID-19 continues to impact the globe, the MWL remains a crucial player in the fight against the pandemic.

The Muslim World League has focused relief efforts in over 20 countries worldwide and has partnered with multiple international relief

organizations working in scores of countries. As Dr. Al-Issa states, "We want Muslims and all other citizens to be aiding one another in this time of common challenge, without discrimination for religion, race, gender, or ethnicity."

This common challenge requires a common solution. This sort of transnational community is one that the MWL and its Charter of Makkah hold in high regard. Helping those in need, regardless of background and belief, brings out the best in us. As the Islamic faith believes, the best amongst us are those who help others. The more we help others, the better we all are.

Prophet Muhammad advised: "Second to faith, no one has ever been given a greater blessing than health."

The MWL has addressed this common challenge in a variety of ways. Multiple campaigns have been launched throughout the last year addressing key issues related to the global pandemic. Improving disinfectant services in countries where good hygiene is lacking has become a key weapon for preventing outbreaks. Providing access to aid such as food baskets, tests, vaccines, protective wear and hospital supplies, items that have been less available to many impoverished countries, has been crucial to managing outbreaks. Continued mutation of the virus itself has demanded more up-to-date research, which the MWL has continuously backed through sponsoring cutting-edge initiatives and research labs. Socially, the MWL has increasingly promoted awareness and education about the COVID-19 pandemic through multiple social platforms in a variety of languages.

The Muslim World League is actively combating the pandemic around the world, specifically in Africa, the Middle East, the Balkan region, and certain areas of western Europe. Alongside international organizations such as the World Health Organization, UNESCO and the International Committee of the Red Cross, the MWL has provided funding and support for people in need. Throughout Africa—in Egypt, Gambia, Malawi, South Africa, Djibouti, Nigeria, Sudan and Somalia—the MWL has donated financial support, medical supplies, and food aid to help local communities survive and combat the pandemic. For example, in March of 2021 the MWL provided the necessary funding to extend and improve the integral medical center in Thies, Senegal.

In the Middle East, the MWL has provided Jordan with millions of dollars in financial support aimed at improving technical and medical train-



The Muslim World League thanks all of its volunteers who have sacrificed their time and effort to help those in need combat the pandemic.

ing. And it has provided Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries with much-needed educational materials, food aid and medical supplies.

Additionally, in South Eastern Europe, the Muslim World League has bolstered the COVID-19 efforts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, and Croatia with funding and supplies. It is these efforts that highlight the MWL's mission to help all in need as it continues to mitigate the global pandemic.

History shows that Islam has always been at the center of the scientific world, and today is no different. BioTech executives and marital partners Dr. Özlem Türeci and Dr. Uğur Şahin are known for their innovations in m-RNA-based cancer vaccines, but when the pandemic struck, these two Muslim scientists felt the duty to focus their efforts into creating a COVID-19 vaccine, which they achieved.

Today their BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine is saving lives around the world. In line with promoting cross-cultural connections, the Saudi-based Jameel Clinic partnered with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to explore how artificial intelligence and machine learning can help stop the spread of COVID-19.

These efforts, along with others, have helped the world begin to get back to normal. The results are promising. Thanks to the efforts of the MWL and groups like it, Saudi Arabia was able to allow 60,000 people to attend the Hajj after the pilgrimage was reduced in scale in 2020. Additionally, as vaccinations increase and travel restrictions decrease, more foreigners will be able to perform Umrah. Successes such as these are only the beginning, and as long as the world faces challenges, the Muslim World League will continue to help battle them.



A Muslim woman receives the COVID vaccine. The MWL continues to provide COVID relief around the world to those in need.



HE Dr. Al-Issa speaks at the The Makkah Charter for Promoting Global Unity and Coexistence forum held on October 27th.

The Makkah Charter for Promoting Global Unity and Coexistence

A forum titled The Makkah Charter for Promoting Global Unity and Coexistence: Inter-faith Cooperation for Security, Health and Development was held in Washington on October 27, 2021. This was the first forum of the Charter of Makkah to promote the concept of one social family with common values, and was organized by major Islamic and non-Islamic religious institutions across the U.S.

The forum began with a discussion session that was followed by workshops. The work-

shops focused on religious freedom, cooperation between different religions, social issues for minorities, and the role of religious responses in times of crisis. The forum also included a discussion of the implementation of the Charter of Makkah in the context of the higher purposes of Islamic law and the United Nations' 17 sustainable development goals. There is much overlap between the principles of the Charter of Makkah and the 17 sustainable development goals, which cover justice, poverty, environmental stewardship,



Nayyera Haq, a Sirius XM host and television commentator, speaks at the The Makkah Charter for Promoting Global Unity and Coexistence forum held on October 27th.

mitigating violence, and promoting peace and coexistence.

Dr. Al-Issa, the secretary-general of the Muslim World League and chairman of the Muslim Scholars Association, spoke at the event. Dr. Al-Issa described the Charter as a significant step in the Islamic world. He stressed that the Charter is a historic document that represents the entire Muslim world, saying, "This charter does not represent one sect or school of thought. It is not just a Sunni document. It represents all of the Islamic world. This was the first time this took place in Islamic history."

Dr. Al-Issa further explained that the message behind the Charter of Makkah began to take root in Islamic awareness, referring to the session of the Islamic Council of Foreign Ministers in Niamey, Niger, in November 2020. He said, "The numerous signatures from the

various Islamic sects on the Charter of Makkah are proof of the great and exceptional impact it has and this is reflected by the unanimous decision of the Islamic countries at the aforementioned Niamey meeting."

Dr. Al-Issa also dealt in depth with the subject of diversity and acceptance of others. "This document talks about a very important topic: the acceptance of all others," he said. "We are different, but we have more in common. We must embrace diversity. It is a crucial aspect of humanity. The charter focuses on educating the global youth. Education must be focused on bringing people together by spreading our common values. This charter says that we must embrace diversity. Diversity must enrich our culture. This is what we should teach our children. But it must be more than just words. We need action. We need more than just initiatives. We must initiate."

Dr. Al-Issa also pointed out that this forum was proof that the Charter of Makkah focuses on partnerships inside and outside the Muslim World. "Today," he said, "we saw the presentation of four global programs based on the principles of the Charter of Makkah: Religious diplomacy and its common values among followers of different religions, youth engagement, women's legitimate empowerment, and capacity building."

Katherine Marshall, the Executive Director of World Faiths Development Dialogue, also spoke at the event. She stressed the importance of women's empowerment, stating "We need to explore areas of differences. One area is women's empowerment. Modernization is not about

happiness. It is a fundamental way people live. Women need to be at the table."

In his remarks, Rabbi David Saperstein said "Hate is just more than murders and arsons

and beatings. It's an attack on the fundamental principles of democracy, pluralism and diversity. If we are going to change this, it requires changing people. How do we teach about faith communities in other communities so that they are seen as our sisters and brothers? What makes this moment different is that there is more interfaith going on across the globe

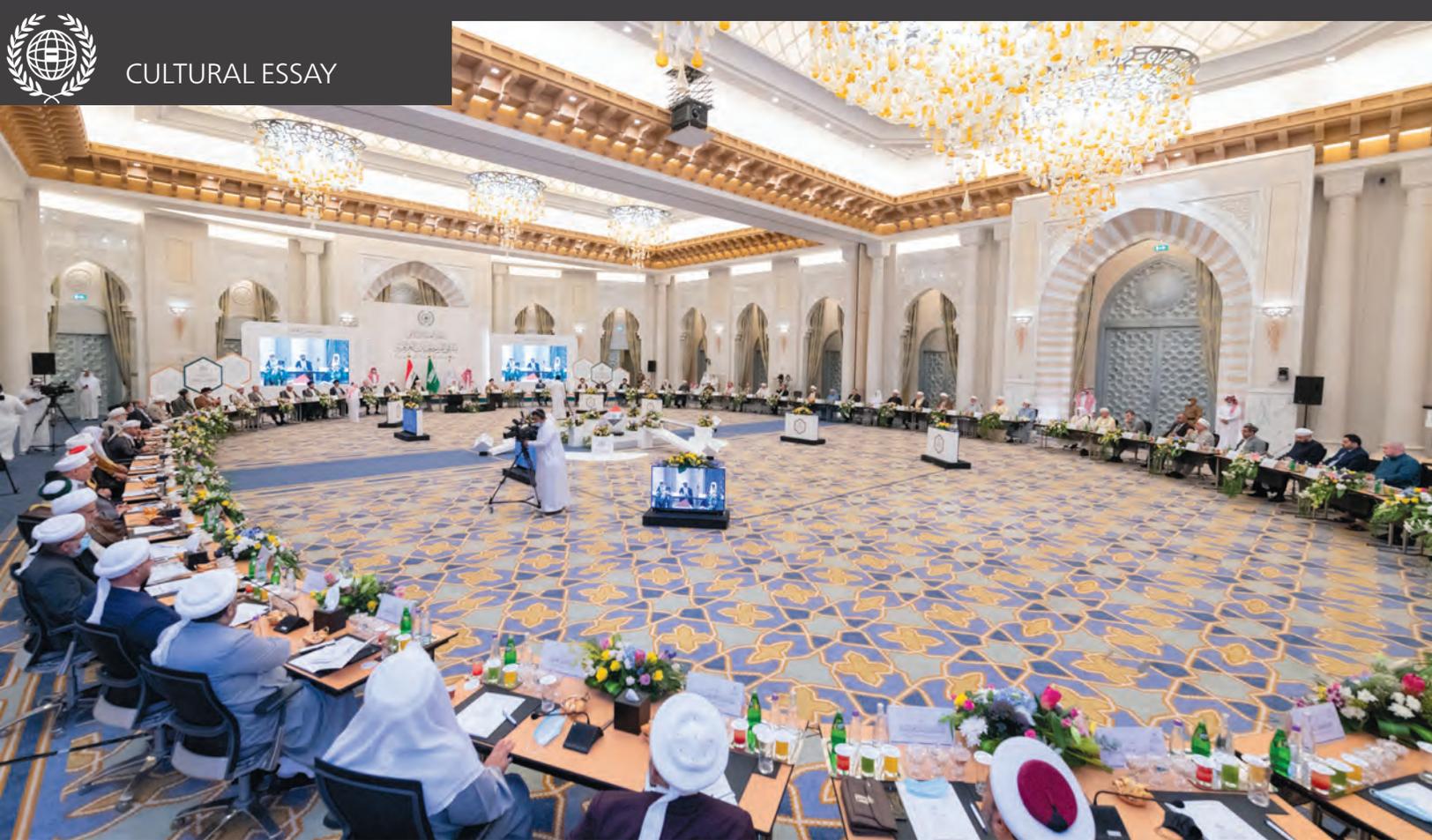
now than at any other point in history...This is what we are doing here and this is what the charter calls for."



The numerous signatures from the various Islamic sects on the Charter of Makkah are proof of the great and exceptional impact it has and this is reflected by the unanimous decision of the Islamic countries at the aforementioned Niamey meeting."

— Dr. Mohammad al-Issa





The Muslim World League hosted the Forum of Iraqi References which brought together 80 prominent Iraqi Sunni and Shiite religious leaders and scholars.

A Year of Promoting Tolerance and Harmony

The principles of tolerance and understanding have been at the core of the Muslim World League's mission since its establishment. During a time when differences often result in disagreements, misunderstandings, and conflict, there is an urgency to promote and instill the practice of tolerance. This is the goal of the Muslim World League's interfaith work, and it has relied to a great extent on events and conferences to bring together Muslims of varying sects and philosophies, as well as followers of other religions, for open dialogue.

As our God Almighty encourages, all faithful followers must treat their brothers and sisters in humanity with respect and love, even when differences surface. Just this year, the Muslim World League has made great strides in promoting these holy practices with the goal of inspiring coexistence, peace, and cooperation.

As stated in the Charter of Makkah, "civilized cultural dialogue is the most effective way to achieve tolerance and understanding, deepen community ties, and overcome obstacles to coexistence." It is the belief of the Muslim



Dr. Al-Issa held a lecture with muftis and imams from different schools of Islamic thought to review and promote the message of moderate Islam.

World League and the Secretary-General, Dr. Al-Issa, that tolerance can be established among people with inherent differences through dialogue, understanding and communion. With this belief at the forefront of the Muslim World League's interfaith work, many events were organized this year to progress towards this goal.

A notable success of such an event was the Forum of Iraqi References hosted by the Muslim World League in Makkah in August of this year. The forum brought together 80 prominent Iraqi Sunni and Shiite religious leaders and scholars, and members of other prominent Iraqi factions, including the Kurds, to discuss proposals to promote unity and reconciliation among the groups. Members of every bloc had the opportunity to voice their concerns, share their perspectives and offer their proposals to create a more peaceful Iraq. The forum resulted in the establishment of a new coordination committee, which now serves as a direct platform for resolving disagreements

among the different groups within Iraq. In addition, the groups created a high-level permanent commission to bolster cooperation on all Iraqi Islamic affairs.

The work did not stop there. This year, Dr. Al-Issa hosted many additional meetings with leaders and scholars representing various schools of Islamic thought. Of note, the Muslim World League organized a roundtable conversation with imams and muftis representing different sects of the American Islamic community and hosted a lecture with more than 1,200 muftis and 4,500 Islamic scholars and leaders to emphasize the guiding principles of moderate Islam.

Another example which highlights the diversity of Dr. Al-Issa's interfaith work is when he met with the Chairperson of the Islamic Commission of Spain, Dr. Ayman Idlibi, to agree upon and sign a memorandum of understanding with the Muslim World League to establish an Islamic youth center which



The Muslim World League made great strides in solidifying interfaith relationships this year with other religions.

will promote the principles of tolerance and coexistence. This acts as a perfect example of the organization's youth-based interfaith work and programming, an important population on which to focus as they are the future of Islam.

As the Muslim World League has worked to promote tolerance within Islam, similar work has been completed with leaders from different faiths. In an effort to build bridges and relationships between Islam and other religions, Dr. Al-Issa has conducted dialogue and hosted events with numerous Jewish and Christian scholars and organizations. He met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, alongside the President of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald Lauder, to detail the important interfaith work being done by the two organizations and their plans to fight intolerance and discrimination through partnership.

The Muslim World League hosted an event with representatives of various faiths to

educate the public on the importance of the Charter of Makkah. Also, the Reject Hate Campaign was launched by the Muslim World League to combat online hate speech and discrimination targeting members of all religions, resulting in support from prominent religious organizations throughout the faith world.

It is important to carry on with the mission to promote tolerance in a world that is rife with injustice and hate. The Muslim World League is proud of its mission and efforts to make the world a more peaceful and harmonious place. When Dr. Al-Issa received the Norwegian Bridge Builders Award and was given an honorary doctorate by the United Nations' University for Peace, it was clear that the MWL's dedication to encouraging cooperation and coexistence is helping to build a world that is far more accepting and tolerant than the one we have known. The Muslim World League looks forward to 2022 and the strides to be made in achieving this important goal.



MWL Humanitarian Assistance: Year in Review

“The Muslim World League must do good for all of humanity – all religions and races – and provide humanitarian services to everyone, regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender or nationality.”

-Dr. Muhammad Al-Issa, Secretary General of the MWL

The Charter of Makkah, endorsed by leading Muslim scholars in 2019, outlines this guiding principle of doing good for all of humanity without reservations. Charitable and humanitarian work has been at the heart of the Muslim World League’s mission since its establishment in 1962. The MWL provides assistance to the less fortunate through a variety of initiatives, from distributing food baskets to supporting orphanages, to developing basic infrastructure in rural communities and to providing emergency relief.

The MWL’s ever-expanding humanitarian missions and partnerships have broadened its international contributions to communities in need. This highlights MWL’s vision to spread peace and security, promote the values of solidarity and harmony, and build a culture of dialogue and mutual respect, all key pillars of true moderate Islam.

The MWL Supports 50K+ Orphaned Children Worldwide.

The Charter of Makkah states that governments are responsible for the health, education and welfare of children. The MWL continues to support over 50,000 orphaned children around the world.

Ramadan Food Basket Program

During Ramadan in April, the MWL distributed Ramadan Iftar coupons for Syrian refugees in Jordan. In May, the MWL distributed food baskets to people in Benin as part of the annual Ramadan Food Basket Program, which provides essential food items to communities in need around the world. These baskets include rice, sugar, oil and other cooking essentials. In the last three years, the MWL has distributed more than 500,000 Ramadan food baskets in more than 30 countries.

These are just a few of the many charitable projects undertaken by the Muslim World League during the holy month of Ramadan. Every year during the sacred month, the MWL delivers food aid, medical tools, and other essential items to vulnerable communities in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Europe.

Relief for Refugees from Central Africa

Since 2018, the Muslim World League has provided assistance to the displaced people of Central Africa in the refugee camps on the borders of the Republic of Chad. Through its Global Relief, Care and Development Authority, the MWL’s urgent relief campaign initially distributed food baskets to 40,000 refugees.



HE Dr. Al-Issa delivering food aid in Senegal.

The MWL pledged to implement regular programs in the region, focusing on health. It is running one of the best health centers in the capital, as well as multi-purpose medical campaigns and camps. The assistance also includes development programs such as urban centers, construction of mosques, digging of wells and care for orphans.

Sponsoring Refugees in Africa

The Muslim World League is a sponsor of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees project, "Live, Learn and Participate," which provides for improved education and healthcare for young refugees in Africa. Earlier this year, the MWL signed an agreement with the UNHCR in a commitment that demonstrates the MWL's ongoing efforts to provide humanitarian aid, particularly as it affects young people.

The agreement outlines a three-year project that will operate in a number of African countries with a total budget of \$14 million USD. The project will focus on young refugees and asylum seekers between 15 and 24

years old, as well as children who have been separated from their families. The project aims to promote sustainable solutions to the refugee crisis by providing safe and adequate housing for refugees and by strengthening educational and development activities, including both elementary-level education and vocational training.

One of the core missions of the MWL is to build bridges of cooperation and understanding among communities around the world. At the heart of this partnership with the UNHCR is the desire to support initiatives that help build a better world, one that is more just and more equitable for all.

COVID-19 Volunteers

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world, volunteers have been at the forefront of medical, community and societal responses. We are grateful for the many Muslim World League volunteers around the world who continue to deliver humanitarian aid to communities in need.



The Pavilion of the Muslim World League.

Fighting the Forces of Hatred and Stemming the Tide of Violent Extremism

The Muslim World League plays a critical role in countering extremist ideology, hatred and discrimination. Through its initiatives in 2021, the Muslim World League has aimed to fight the forces of hatred and stem the tide of violent extremism.

At the beginning of the year, the MWL was proud to host the Declaration of Peace in Afghanistan Conference. Dr. Al-Issa brought to-

gether scholars from Afghanistan and Pakistan to agree on a pathway toward enduring peace in Afghanistan. Through this meeting, nations were able to partner closely to respond to threats to international peace and security and help the Afghan people chart their future.

This spring, the MWL also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Banjul (Gambia)-based Fatoumatta Bah Barrow (FaBB)

Charitable Foundation to implement a package of comprehensive relief and development projects. The MOU widens of the scope of cooperation regarding the management of Al Salam Health Center in the village of Nema Kunku, just outside the city of Serekunda, and opens possibilities for more cooperation in the future. Most recently, The FaBB Foundation in collaboration with the Muslim World League Food Basket Project recently distributed food items to over 600 families across the country. These commitments reaffirmed the MWL's support for peace and the organization's willingness to help bring about an end to conflict.

Additionally, the MWL formed a partnership with the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change in July to deliver an educational agenda to 100,000 teenagers (ages 13 to 17 years) across 18 countries, including the United States, France, India, Ukraine, and the UK with the skills of critical thinking and dialogue in a bid to empower them to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the future. The plan was designed to bring together a collective idea of a future generation of educated, empowered and unprejudiced universal nations.

This summer, Dr. Al-Issa and the Muslim World League were awarded an honorary doctorate by the United Nations in recognition for his groundbreaking work as a global peacemaker. In honoring Dr. Al-Issa, the U.N.'s University for Peace cited the MWL secretary general's "outstanding efforts in supporting international diplomacy, promoting friendship and cooperation among people, and effective endeavors in combating hate."

With the goal of preventing extremism through cooperation and compromise, the Muslim World League hosted a forum of civil discourse with representatives from the major religious and cultural sects of Iraq. The forum acted as an example of how interfaith dialogue

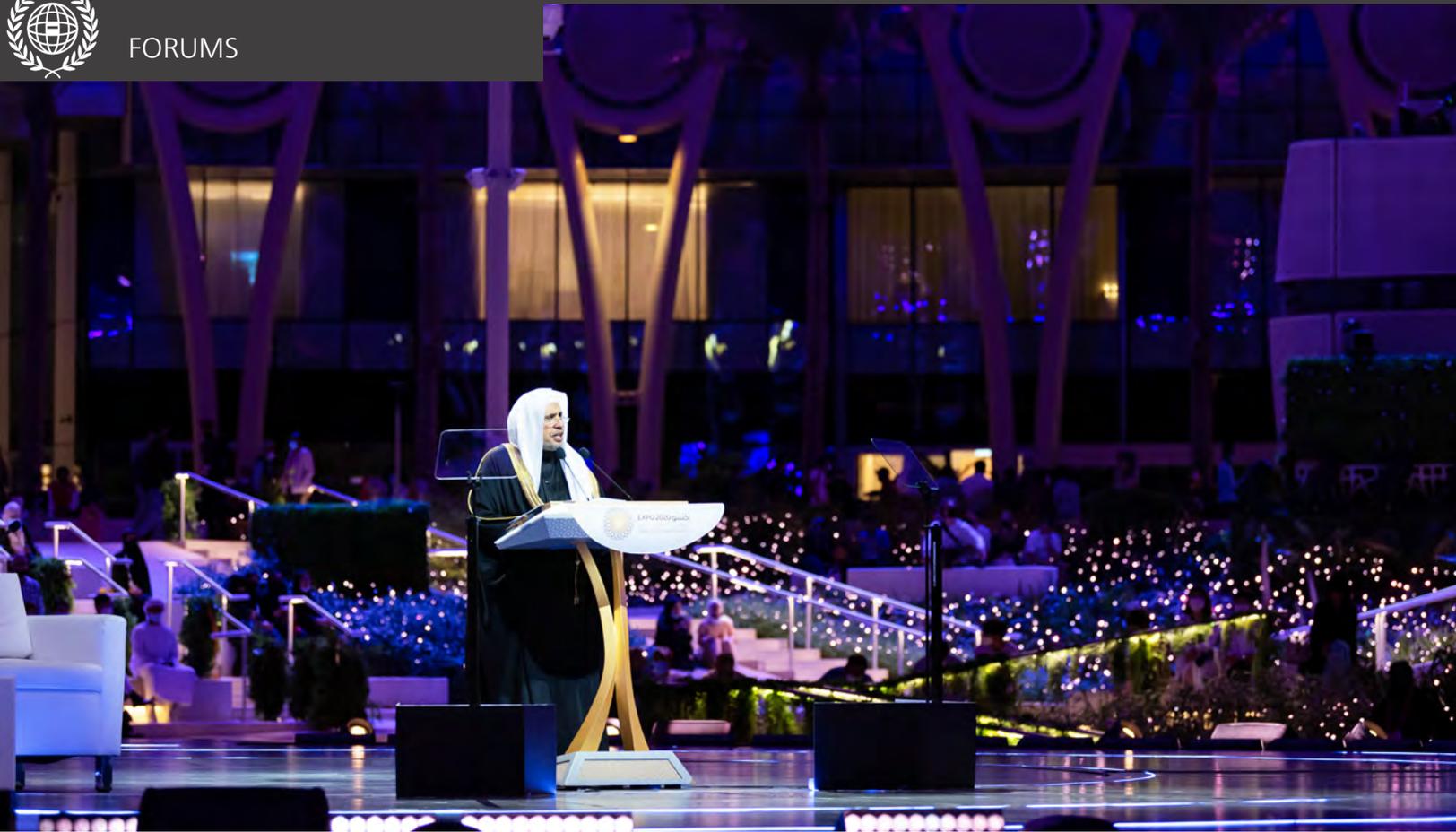


The Muslim World League has launched an exhibition on the lives of the prophets at its Expo 2020 Dubai pavilion. This new exhibit sheds light on the MWL's messages of peace, love, affection, tolerance, coexistence, and humanity. "

can both combat extremism and promote moderate Islam as processes were established at the conclusion of the forum to resolve disagreements among the sects, ultimately preventing differences in beliefs from evolving into dangerous ideologies.

To end a year dedicated to combatting hatred, the Muslim World League has launched an exhibition on the lives of the prophets at its Expo 2020 Dubai pavilion. This new exhibit sheds light on the MWL's messages of peace, love, affection, tolerance, coexistence, and humanity. "The Prophets as if You See Them" uses the latest technology to present the biographies of Islam's prophets and messengers. It also highlights the ethics of Prophet Muhammad and Islam's traditional embrace of inclusiveness.

During a recent trip to Italy, the Secretary General of Muslim Council of Elders, Dr. Sultan Al Remeith, said, "The Muslim World League is an important strategic pillar in establishing peace and stability as well as countering extremism." Over the past twelve months, the MWL has engaged in selective efforts to combat instability and foster peaceful, self-reliant communities across the globe.



Dr. Al-Issa said the MWL launched an initiative in Europe to promote national values and raise awareness of Muslims about the importance of respecting countries' constitutions, laws, and cultures

Peace Promotion Forum in Dubai commends Makkah Declaration

Dubai - MWL

His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Muslim World League (MWL) and Chairman of the Association of Muslim Scholars, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, delivered an opening speech recently during the launch of the Forum for Promotion of Peace, held in the Great Hall of Expo 2020 Dubai entitled: "Inclusive Citizenship from Shared Existence to Shared Conscience", under the patronage of H.H Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The forum emphasized the central role of the Makkah Declaration (The Charter of Makkah) in the consolidation of the values and principles of comprehensive citizenship. This historic declaration was sponsored by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, may Allah protect him, and supported by the Crown Prince, His Royal Highness Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, may Allah protect him, in the presence of the Mufti and scholars of the Islamic nation of all sects, where more than 1,200 muftis and scholars and more than 4,500 Islamic thought leaders signed the Declaration in Makkah near the Kaaba during the holy month of Ramadan 2019.

The forum was inaugurated by H.H Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE's Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence and continued until December 7th. At the beginning of his speech, His Excellency welcomed the MWL's SG as a keynote speaker at the forum's opening ceremony.

H.H Sheikh Nahyan said: "We're meeting today to discuss the issue of comprehensive citizenship, which is an important expression of faith and hope in humanity's future, as well as the attendees' interest in promoting the values of acquaintance, dialogue, understanding, and common goal, as well as supporting channels of acquaintance and coexistence among all, which is an affirmation of your important role, and also our role all in raising awareness of man and elevating their knowledge, perceptions, capabilities and behavior, as well as enabling them to perform their role and the basis for shaping the present and building the future.

This was followed by Dr. Al-Issa's speech, in which he stated that the issue of comprehensive citizenship, based on its common religious and cultural values and human values with their general natural law, its special and general constitutional texts and principles, its laws, charters, and international norms, means coexistence on national lands with full rights, duties, and equal opportunities within its "local" framework.



Dr. Al-Issa: The Makkah Declaration established the concept of comprehensive citizenship, which is a global goal requiring us to understand all its details

His Excellency added, "Comprehensive citizenship, in its "global" framework, also means human partnership in 'investment', 'management', and 'protection' of our planet, on which Allah Almighty made us heirs and dwellers, so that people can do justice, in the broadest sense of the term, and this can only be accomplished in the true sense of the human family, with its shared values, laws, and norms.

"The first meaning of comprehensive citizenship is taken care of and protected by the national state, and its giving and performance will be based on its efficiency," Dr. Al-Issa said. The second meaning is carried out by all good forces with sincere and effective will, beginning with cooperation between nations and peoples within the framework of their interrelationships, or within the framework of their global international system with all its organizations and bodies framed by laws, charters, treaties, agreements, and international norms.

When the topic is citizenship, however, it is simple to transition to a review of the values and principles mentioned, along with other pertinent details. All of this is self-evident, and we do not need any further elaboration, but what we need in our world is a sincere and effective will that keeps its constant on the path of determination, then proceeds with true work.

As a result, we must first pave the way by re-searching the challenges, obstacles, and contro-



The Forum for Promotion of Peace emphasized the central role of the Makkah Declaration in the consolidation of the values and principles of comprehensive citizenship

versies of comprehensive citizenship, then devising solutions that ensure its long-term viability. This is more important than being reminded of those values, principles, and other details in our world. Yes, a reminder is important, but the most important thing is to work with it, and the ethics of application are more important than the abstract work.

He continued, "A single text, for example, is used by various tendencies and passions, and the truth is claimed by a growing group in our world, propelled by political bets with open and clear goals, whose contexts are based on intellectual trends with extremist tendencies. They are, as I said, many around the world and have been for decades, if not centuries, and in a number of



Al Nahyan: Inclusive citizenship is an important expression of confidence and hope in the future of humanity

those debates, they have gone beyond the logic of understanding and moral dialogue, and communication between nations, peoples, and states, ignoring the search for the truth whose

details may have been missing.”

“This model, which practices that inhumane employment, is not granted a sustainable success by Allah, and history, both recent and distant, bears witness to that,” he added. These cases insist on an integrated solution, and the solution lies in the true meaning of studying the issue of comprehensive citizenship in all of its aspects, specifically highlighting the meaning of religious, cultural, and constitutional peculiarity in general, which expresses the national conscience of each state and explains the importance of that all, and its special identity, which must be appreciated, in respect of national sovereignty, with its religious and cultural peculiarities.

He pointed out that, “As a result, in our vast world, we require a comprehensive citizenship dialogue because there is a dimension missing from many of its details and overlaps. Therefore, I believe that comprehensive citizenship is both a national and a global goal that necessitates understanding all of its nuances, including taking into account its constitutional and legal differences based on sovereign rights with positive logic in each state’s legislation and culture, as well as the need for all to respect international laws, principles, norms, and common human values.”

“Based on the importance of understanding these details with their differences, we say and repeat that international differences must be taken into account in the specificity of their sovereign measures as well as religious and cultural convictions before generalizing theories and judgments,” Dr. Al-Issa added.

“I may come to one of the comprehensive citizenship issues,” Dr. Al-Issa continued. Our world is suffering from a return to racism in its abhorrent ignorance, and it is infiltrating not into economically backward or so-called developing countries, but into first-world countries.

When you look for the reason for this civilization-al backwardness that has not kept up with the



Dr. Al-Issa: The ideas of the so-called political Islam reduced the religion to a narrow political goal and escalated civilizational clash between East and West

astonishing material progress, you often find it in one place: a gap in education. Yes, it is education that devoted all study hours to the provision of science alone, without making time for interactive behavioral education, so the great scientist came out, not saturated with religious, national, and human values, and we may say, for the sake of agreement, is not saturated with common human values.

As a result, the scientist who created weapons of mass destruction and threatened human existence with them learned science but did not learn values. We must not overlook the role of the family in establishing the values we have discussed, as it is the nucleus of society and the first and most important partner in shaping the minds of young people.

Meanwhile, Dr. Al-Issa warned that the Makkah Declaration, sponsored by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and supported by Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, and approved by the Islamic countries at their ministerial meeting in Niamey, Niger, has devoted a context on comprehensive citizenship in its twenty-second article. He stated that it is a right dictated by Islamic justice principles for the entire national diversity, in which the constitution and the system expressing national conscience are respected, emphasizing the legitimate and complete empowerment of women as one of the pillars of comprehensive citizenship.



Bin Bayyah: Thanks to the values that education establishes in souls, citizenship elevates to fraternity, and from common existence to shared conscience

His Excellency stated that the MWL launched an initiative from Europe to promote national values, with one of its primary goals being to raise awareness of the importance of respecting countries' constitutions, laws, and cultures, whether among their citizens or those residing on their lands, within the framework of a correct understanding of religious and national identity, based on the fact that they complement rather than contradict.

This is in light of religion's purposes, which call for peace and harmony. Religion came only to call for the tranquility of societies and to affect their harmonious national cohesion and order the fulfillment of covenants, harmony among hearts, and investigating the outcomes of matters with the insight of Shari'ah and the logic of reason with the legitimate claim in accordance with the rules and provisions of the constitution and the law, as well as peace, for religious privacy.

This is in addition to the warning against the dangers of so-called political Islam ideas, as they are outside the context of Islamic Shari'ah, as these ideas reduced the great religion to a narrow political goal, and weaved for it a false robe of Islam, leading to slander against Islam, hatred in its worst form, the escalation of civilized conflict and clash between East and West, and then incitement to violence and terrorism, and they are a threat.

His Excellency concluded his speech by congratulating the United Arab Emirates on its fiftieth

National Day and wishing it everlasting prosperity and development on behalf of the MWL.

His Excellency the President of the Forum for the Promotion of Peace, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah, said at the opening ceremony: "Citizenship is not based solely on equality in rights and responsibilities, nor is it a purely legal concept. They will only be stable if they are built on a solid foundation of values. Citizenship is elevated to fraternity and moves from common existence to shared conscience as a result of the values that education instills in souls, so that citizenship becomes a melting pot in which all affiliations melt."

Sheikh Bin Bayyah added: "Recognizing the impact of the new age on the concept of citizenship is unavoidable, and denying it leads to failure and, possibly, strife. Being a modern citizen necessitates the ability to communicate with the times. It presents a variety of concepts and values with titles such as freedoms and women's and children's rights. It is also distinguished by the mingling of civilizations and intercultural marriages in a never-ending movement and amazing developments."

As one of the scholars of the Makkah Declaration who handed it over to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the sponsor of its historic conference and blessed assembly, Sheikh Bin Bayyah praised the contents of the Makkah Declaration on the subject of comprehensive citizenship in his speech.

His Excellency Sheikh Noor al-Haq Qadri, Minister of Religious Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, also stated that the forum's topic is significant because citizenship is perhaps the most important building block on the road to stability, security, and development, pointing to a number of ideas on comprehensive citizenship to achieve this important goal.

The sessions included several themes and were attended by a number of Islamic and non-Islamic religious leaders along with a number of international thinkers.



Hashim Amla's net worth is believed to be over \$50 million while his annual income is estimated to be around \$ 2.5 million

Hashim Amla a Devoted Muslim Cricketer

M. Minhaj Niloy

“ We are familiar with popular cricketers around the earth who are talented, prominent, as well as out of box thinkers. Players are remembered not only for their charismatic achievements but also for their religious views and practices. They inspired many individuals across the world and most of them came from humble origins and rose to fame in the cricket world. People remember them even after their tenure in cricket life.



Hashim Amla is a source of inspiration to the Muslim youth for his hard work, leadership qualities, and religious dedication

Hashim Amla is one of them. He is an inspiration to the Muslim youth for his hard work, leadership qualities, religious dedication, and down-to-earth nature. Hashim Amla is a devout Muslim cricketer who played for South Africa. This legend cricketer practiced his religious faith regularly on the cricket ground. He was born on the 31st March 1983 in Tongaat, South Africa. He is from the Muslim Ansari family, with roots in Gujarat, India. South Africa's star batsman is 5 feet 10 inches tall. He attended Durban High School, which has produced notable cricketers like Lance Klusener and Barry Richards. Hashim Amla is also known as Hashim Mohamed Amla.

Devotion to Religion

The most interesting thing is that he kept playing during fasting, the Islamic month of Ramadan. According to Amla, Ramadan has a beneficial impact on matches and training. There have been times when he has been batting in Durban on hot and humid summer days. He expressed his point, "When I tell people that I learned so much in my game while fasting, they are shocked. And I remember thinking to myself with a bone-dry tongue and pounding headache... When am I going to get out because this is too much for me,



Players are remembered not only for their charismatic achievements but also for their religious views and practices

Alhamdulillah, I went on to make a big score, but I learned after passing through that stage of thirst and mental exhaustion that the boundaries we place on our bodies and minds may, and at times must be pushed." Even Hashim Amla refused to wear the Castle logo jersey and instead chose to pay a \$500 fine instead. He has an amazing beard and appears to take his Muslim beliefs seriously in every aspect.

Cricket Career

Amla led the South African under 19 cricket team as a captain at the U 19 Cricket World Cup in New Zealand, 2002 during the early years of his career. This South African professional cricketer represents his country in all three formats of cricket, including Tests, One-Day Internationals, and Twenty-20 Internationals. He is recognized

as one of the greatest batsmen of all time. Amla is the first South African to score a triple century in a Test match, and he set an international record by scoring 5,000 ODI runs in just 101 innings. As of January 2019, Amla had 28 Test matches and 27 ODI matches centuries. On November 28, 2004, he made his test debut for South Africa against India at Eden Gardens. In 2006, Amla achieved his first test century against New Zealand. He made his one-day international debut against Bangladesh in 2008 and scored his first international century against the same opponent in Benoni, South Africa.

The monk-like cricketer had a purple patch in 2010, scoring 1000+ runs at an incredible average of about 75. The main feature of his cricketing repertoire is his consistency in both Tests and ODIs. Despite his stellar Test record, he was regarded to be unsuited to the shorter formats of the game, but he proved everyone wrong when the Proteas toured the West Indies for a five-match ODI series in 2010. That performance earned him a permanent spot in the South African ODI team, as well as an opportunity to play T20Is. The Kia Oval holds a special place in Amla's heart because it was here that he became the first South African to reach a triple century, an undefeated 311 against England in 2012. He was named one of Wisden's Cricketers of the Year in 2013 and became the fourth player in ODI history to score a century against every nation that plays Test cricket. Hashim Amla's name quickly became synonymous with consistency. Amla has 9271 international white-ball runs. He also played in three 50-over World Cups and three T20 World Cups during his international career. He was chosen to the 2015 World ODI XI team alongside Tillakaratne Dilshan, AB de Villiers, and Imran Tahir for his impressive performances. Despite not being a powerful hitter, Amla has thrived in T20 cricket. He finished sixth on the list of best run-getters in the 2017 Indian Premier League, a season in which he scored 200 runs. In 2021, Amla has had some memorable performances, including 173 in an LV= County Championship triumph over Gloucestershire and a 278-ball 37 not out to preserve the match for Surrey



Hashim Amla is a devout Muslim cricketer who practiced his religious faith even on the cricket ground



His teammates and opponents alike consider him as the nicest, humblest, and gentlest person and love to watch him play

against Hampshire. South Africa's skilled and prolific run-scorer has made a living as a professional cricketer. He owns the record for the fastest time to 2000, 3000, 4000, 5000, 6000, and 7000 ODI runs, demonstrating his incredible consistency. On 8th August 2019, Amla, South Africa's second-highest Test run-scorer with 9,282 runs in 124 matches, retired from international cricket and signed a two-year contract with Surrey. As of 2019, Hashim Amla's net worth is believed to be over \$50 million. His annual income is estimated to be around \$ 2.5 million, which he earns from South Cricket.

Hashim Amla, the perfect cricketing gentleman left a magnificent legacy. One of the best Protea batsmen, with over 18,000 international runs, had a remarkable career, and cricket will remember him for his patience and modesty. He is one of the few cricketers who has quickly established himself as a legend. He is a joy to watch. Both teammates and opponents consider him as the nicest, humblest, and gentlest person.



There are poor groups and segments of society that are in desperate need of assistance

Volunteering

a Culture Rooted in Islamic Heritage

By Ashwag Yahia Al-Yami

“ In recent years, the importance of the role that civil society organizations can play has grown, because they form the pulse of society, have the ability to move among citizens quickly, and have complete knowledge of their societies' details. As a result, they can help to raise individual and societal awareness in order to achieve development and reform.

For all of this, it is regarded as the primary channel for governments to achieve many objectives and to fulfill roles that may be difficult for official authorities to perform due to the complexities of administrative work, routine, and bureaucracy. As a result, it has come to rely on these organizations to bridge the gap between real needs and the slowness of government institutions.

These organizations can also promote tolerance and coexistence, combating the spread of hate speech and extremism, implementing national awareness and educational strategies to counter calls for racism, and achieving national programs in education and media. It can instill new concepts that include clarifying the importance of national unity, the tendency to tolerance and coexistence, avoiding extremism, and rejecting hatred and exclusion.

Youth Communities

Most of Islamic societies are characterized by an increase in the percentage of young people, and the majority of their residents are between the ages of 18 to 35 years, which clearly means that they are promised a bright future, due to the potential of this segment and the credit it represents as half the present and all the future. If these capabilities are properly utilized, they will lead to the achievement of great goals and multiple benefits.

One of the most important fields to benefit from these young people's energies is volunteering, which has become one of the most important tools of civil society for achieving many goals that societies require but are difficult for official government agencies to carry out for the reasons mentioned above. As a result, these human forces are capable of fulfilling this role.

Multiple Gains

The benefits of activating voluntary work are not limited to the gains that these young people achieve for others; rather, work contributes to increasing their national soul by raising their



Islamic societies influenced
by religion's teachings
represent a fertile
environment for growth of
volunteering

patriotic spirit, increasing their abilities and skills, and leading them to a sense of responsibility and work habitualness, and thus raising their Individual and societal awareness.

Due to the presence of many businesspersons who want to serve their country as much as they can, and the spread of charitable institutions in Islamic countries, there is a possibility to adopt voluntary associations and train their members on methods of modern voluntary work, and to provide national incubators that can accommodate them and benefit from their enormous potential.

Spontaneous Reaction

We see very important work done by these young people in many countries, especially during the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic, as well as in cases of torrential rains, floods, and storms, where they take the initiative to organize themselves into groups that rush to enter the affected neighborhoods, provide assistance to the residents, and erect barriers that stop the flow of water and remove rubble and mud. Some of them cooperate with charities that provide food.

The majority of these young people organize their ranks on their own, without being invited by any official or popular group, because they share a desire for charitable work and a love of their homeland. So, if they are organized, trained, and direct their efforts in a scientific manner, there is no doubt that the outcome will be higher quality, let alone society will reap the benefits of such action.



Most young people share a desire for charitable work and a love of their homeland



United Nations organizations have called upon colleges to graduate youth cadres capable of meeting volunteering requirements

Honing Skills

Among the benefits of supporting and strengthening volunteer work organizations is a greater sense of belonging among young people, who often make up the majority of volunteers. It instills a patriotic spirit in them, sharpens their abilities, expands their skills, instills a sense of responsibility in them, and accustoms them to work, all of which leads to an increase in individual and societal awareness.

This great treasure can be used to achieve many goals, especially if these youth cadres are trained on the latest requirements of volunteering work.

This field is no longer the same as it was in the past, and it has multiplied into different areas as a result of the passage of time and the multiplicity of needs, to the point where it has become a science that is taught in universities. As a result, humanitarian relief organizations and United Nations organizations have designated colleges to graduate youth cadres capable of meeting the requirements, based on specific scientific standards and foundations.

The Necessity of Continuity

Volunteering should not be dependent on natural disasters or crises, but rather there is an urgent need for it to continue. There are poor groups and segments of society that are in desperate



Volunteering should not be dependent on natural disasters or crises, but rather there is an urgent need for it to continue

need of assistance, and the assistance does not necessarily have to be monetary; instead, the need may be cultural, educational, or legal, as many people may require educational support, legal or medical advice but do not have the means to pay for it. As a result, many organizations have emerged that provide these services to the needy for free, constituting a benefit that exceeds financial assistance in these cases.

The Importance of Assimilation

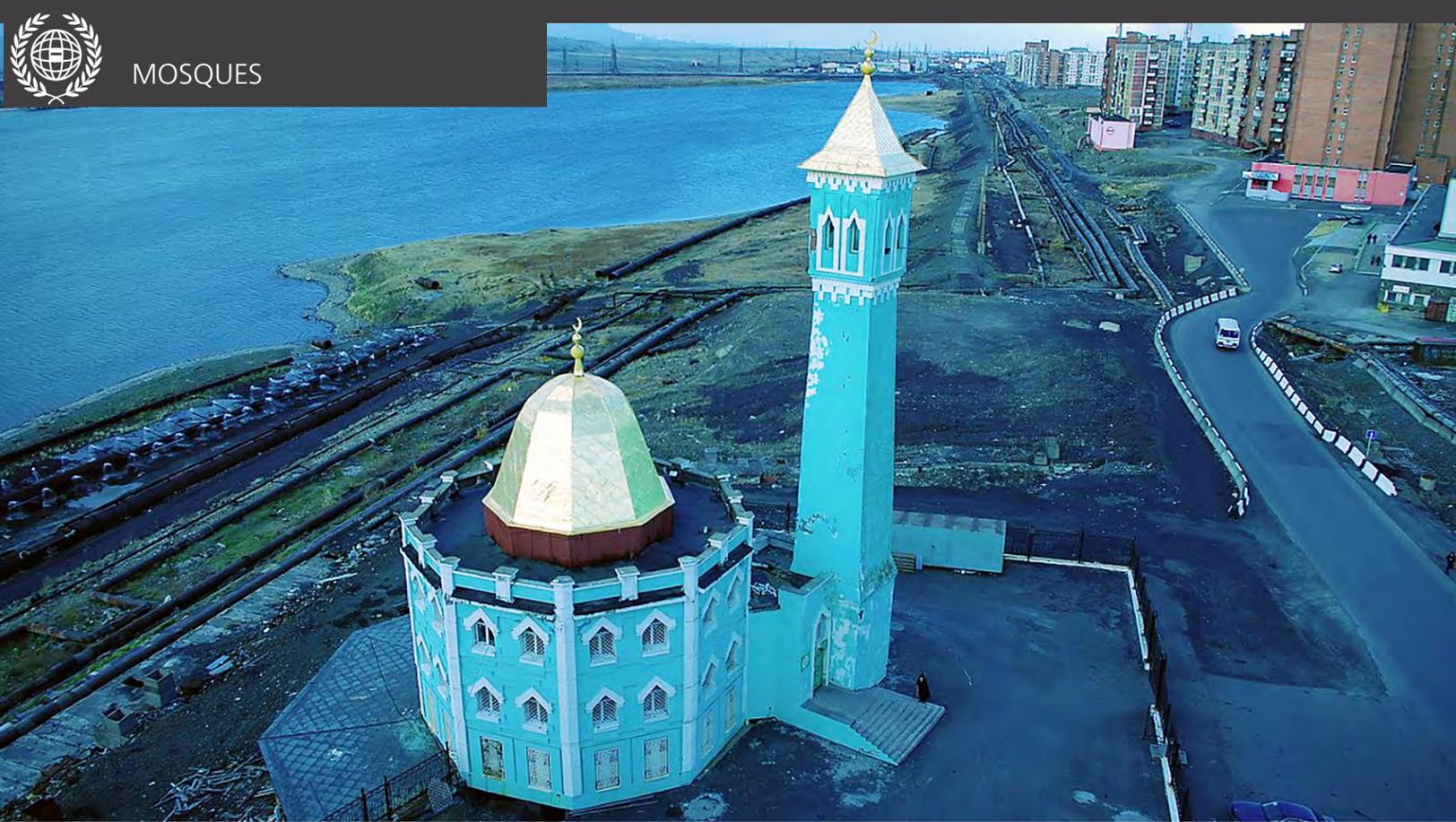
The culture of volunteering is rooted in our rich heritage. Islamic societies that have been influenced by their great religion's teachings represent a fertile environment for the growth of volunteering and charitable work, which should be invested and developed by accommodating the community's needs, arranging priorities, preparing human cadres, and developing an appropriate administrative and legal system to serve as an



Volunteering organizations can instill a patriotic spirit and sense of responsibility in youth and sharpen their abilities

umbrella under which all voluntary organizations can operate.

Because young people have a lot of energy and a strong desire to serve their countries and societies, we should make the best of their energy as soon as possible to achieve a lot of things. If we don't, they will find themselves in a vacuum that may lead them to drugs, and extremist and violent entities may take advantage of the situation and recruit them.



Nurd-Kamal Mosque, Norilsk, Russia, is registered in the Guinness Book of Records as northernmost mosque

The Race to be “World’s Nearest Mosque to North Pole”

By Dr. Saeed Al Khotani

Today, Muslims are almost everywhere in the world. They even reached the Arctic (land of bears), in pursuit of decent living, despite its very harsh environment and extreme living conditions.

The Arctic is a vast region, covering almost 14.5 million square kilometers from the Arctic Circle (at 66° latitude from Ecuador where latitude is 0) up to the geographic North Pole (at 90 latitude), the northernmost point in the world.

The region is largely composed of the Arctic Ocean, which is covered with sea ice most of the year, and land parts of the eight states surrounding the ocean: Canada, Denmark (via Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden, and the United States.

The Arctic has had inhabitants for thousands of years. At Present it has almost 4 million inhabitants, around ninety thousands of them are Muslims, as estimated by this report. Most of these Muslim (90%) live in the Russian Arctic cities of Norilsk and Murmansk.

Like their brethren in other parts of the world, Arctic Muslims have always dreamed of having mosques where they live. By hard work and generous donations, they succeeded in founding around seventy officially recognized mosques. These mosques range between a custom built one or a modest prayer apartment or just a room or space in a building.

The majority of these mosques are located in the populous cities and towns above the Arctic Circle and just below it. Almost 59 mosques are in the Russian Arctic while the remaining 11 mosques are in the Norwegian and Canadian Arctic.

Tracing Race Origin

During the past three decades, around ten mosques (listed in table 1 below) were found inside Arctic Circle. Almost each of them claimed, at founding time, and some still claiming, the distinction of being: "World's nearest mosque to North Pole," or in other words, "World's northernmost mosque."

The continuation of the claim by every mosque built further north of the world indicates that there is some kind of race going on between these mosques to gain that distinction hoping it might bring them reputation and more resources.

Table (1) below shows a list of mosques



Arctic's current inhabitants have reached four million, of whom 90,000 are Muslims

claiming to be the nearest to North Pole (Alphabetically ordered):

Country	City or Town	Mosque Name
Norway	Tromso	Alnor Center Mosque
Norway	Alta	Alta Mosque
Norway	Kirkenes	Kirkenes Mosque
Canada	Inuvik	Midnight Sun Mosque
Norway	Hammerfest	Al Hidayah Center Mosque
Norway	Tromso	Al Rahma Mosque
Russia	Murmansk	Murmansk Mosque
Russian	Norilsk	Nurd-Kamal Mosque
Norway	Tromso	UjT Mosque (at University of Tromso)
Norway	Vadso	Vadso Mosque

To trace the race with the little information available, only six of these ten mosques are presented here.

In 1991, Al-Rahma Mosque was established in Tromso, Norway, as the first mosque in the city, with a claim of being World's nearest mosque to the North Pole. The Mosque serves around 1000 Muslims of its estimated 76 thousand population.

In 1998, Nurd-Kamal Mosque was opened in Norilsk, Russia, after five year of construction work. Its founder, Midekhat Bikmeyev, a Norilsk entrepreneur of Tatar origin, named it after his beloved father Nurdin and mother Gain-ikamal. This custom-built Mosque is registered in the Guinness Book of Records as the northernmost mosque (World's nearest mosque to the North Pole). Currently it serves over 50,000 Muslims of the city's 210 thousand population.



Midnight Sun Mosque was assembled in Winnipeg, Canada, then transported in an epic journey to Inuvik, 4,500 kilometers away from Winnipeg



Muslims in Arctic founded around seventy officially recognized mosques located in the populous cities and towns above the Arctic Circle

2006, Alnor Senter Mosque (formerly Masjid Al Noor) was founded in Tromsø, as the second mosque in the city. It was housed further north in a portion of a modern residential and office building further north of the first mosque in the

In city, Al Rahma Mosque. Therefore, Alnor Senter Mosque was considered by some as the World's nearest mosque to the North Pole, in place of Al Rahma Mosque.

In 2009, authorities approved building Murmansk Mosque, Russia, to serve over 30,000 Muslims of this Barents Sea busy port city. The two-story mosque, renovated in 2013, was wrongly touted by some media as being the first mosque in the Arctic Circle, and thus World's nearest mosque to the North Pole. It clearly seems that these media haven't heard of Tromsø or Norilsk mosques.

Mosque Epic Journey

In 2010, Midnight Sun Mosque was opened in Inuvik, Canada, for about 100 Muslims of the

town's 3,600 population. Some media wrongly claimed that it is the world's nearest mosque to North Pole by 200 kilometers, while in fact, it is just 200 km inside the Arctic Circle.

To reduce the C\$ 500,000 cost of building the Mosque in Inuvik by third, it was decided to be built further south in Winnipeg. Once the Mosque was assembled in a pre-fabricated structure, it was sent to Inuvik by its main fundraiser, the Canada based, Zubaidah Tallab Foundation, based in Winnipeg and chaired by the Saudi philanthropist and physician Husain Quisti.

The 23 days of very long distance journey of the Mosque (around 4250 kilometers, 2400 kilometers by road and 1800 by river), to reach its destination, had captured the emotions of the media and people in Canada. Therefore, it was described as an epic journey and as the longest in the world to move a pre-fabricated structure. Moreover, some media gave it a daily update. The Saudi ambassador to Canada, Naayef al-Sedairi was honored by visiting the mosque in 2018.

In 2014, Al Hidaya Center Mosque was inaugurated in Hammerfest, Norway, at a premises built by the Labor Movement in the 1950s. The premises, called House of People, were used for various purposes including events and festivals. Later it was acquiring by Hammerfest Muslim Center. The center renovated the premises and converted it into the largest mosque in Northern Norway, to serve around 250 Muslims of the town's 10 thousand population.

The claim of being World's nearest mosque to the North Pole usually was based on a number of considerations such as the geographic proximity, ownership, official recognition, functional operation (for rented and non-custom built mosques).

Definition of the Mosque

Almost all claimant mosques, at the time of



Geographic proximity, ownership and official recognitions are taken into consideration when deciding the World's nearest mosque to the North Pole



Al Hidaya Center Mosque in Hammerfest Town, Norway, could be the World's nearest mosque to North Pole at present

their founding, were right in their claim of distinction as being World's nearest mosque to the North Pole. But with founding more mosques further north in the Arctic, this distinction ceased to be the trademark of one specific Arctic mosque.

This fact has made it necessary to reconsider the position of current claimants of this distinction by re-basing it on objective counts. Two such considerations are suggested by this report, the geographic proximity and the mosque definition. The first can be measured by kilometer, while the second can be verified

by mosque ownership and official recognition by authorities (to benefit from public aid and avoid being suspected of terrorism affiliation).

While it is very rare to have a disagreement on the geographic proximity, a controversy may arise on mosque definition. Some people may define a mosque as any place demarcated for prayer, regardless of being owned, rented, recognized, or custom built. Others may define it as an owned premises and officially recognized.

Though both mosque definitions are correct, this report will adapt the latter one. This is, because it can be supported by the practice of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, in two incidents.

In one incident, the Prophet insisted on owning the land on which he built his mosque in AL-Madinah, in the early days of his immigration from Makkah. Despite that the land was offered to him as a gift, by both its custodian and the two orphan boys who owned it by inheritance from their father.

In the other incident, the Prophet declined to inaugurate (officially recognize) Thu Awan mosque near Qubaa mosque in Al-Madinah, though he promised to do so once he returns from the Battle of Tabuk. Instead, he ordered the demolition of the mosque, (known in the Holy Qur'an as dhirar (harm) mosque), after it was revealed to him that the mosque was founded by hypocrites with the intention to disturb Muslims' stability and unity.

Al Hidaya the Nearest

Based on the two suggested considerations, we can confidently say that Al Hidaya Center Mosque in Hammerfest is "World's nearest mosque to North Pole," at present, passing ahead the nine claimant mosques including the strongest competitors: Alnor and Nurd-Kamal Mosques,

The Al Hidaya Center Mosque is qualified for this distinction because it meets both considerations: the geographic proximity and the mosque definition adapted by this report. The other claimants did not meet the geographic proximity though they had met the mosque definition.

Hammerfest town is at 2,150 kilometers distance from North Pole, while other cities and towns, in which the remaining claimant mosques are located, are at longer distances, as follows: Tromsø at 2,262 km, Norilsk at 2,298, Murmansk at 2,348 km, and Inuvik at 2,416 km, as shown in table (2) below:

Town or City	Distance from North Pole	Mosques
Hammerfest	2150 km	Al Hidaya Center Mosque
Tromsø	2262 km	1- Alnor Center Mosque 2- Al Rahma Mosque
Norilsk	2298 km	Nurd-Kamal Mosque
Murmansk	2348 km	Murmansk Mosque
Inuvik	2416 km	Midnight Sun Mosque

However, this distinction of Al Hidaya Center Mosque in Hammerfest as World's nearest mosque to North Pole, may be lost any time. This is for example if any mosque is built further north of Al Hidaya Center Mosque in Hammerfest, or in Longyearbyen, capital of Svalbard archipelago, Norway, located only 1,384 kilometers from North Pole.



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