



# *The Muslim 500*

THE WORLD'S 500 MOST  
INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS

2012





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The Muslim 500:  
The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims, 2012  
Second Edition  
ISBN: 978-9975-428-37-2  
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The Muslim 500 was the brain-child of H.R.H.  
Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad and therefore he does  
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Set in Garamond Premiere Pro & Myriad Pro  
Printed in The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

© 2011 The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre  
20 Sa'ed Bino Road, Dabuq  
PO BOX 950361  
Amman 11195, JORDAN  
<http://www.rissc.jo>

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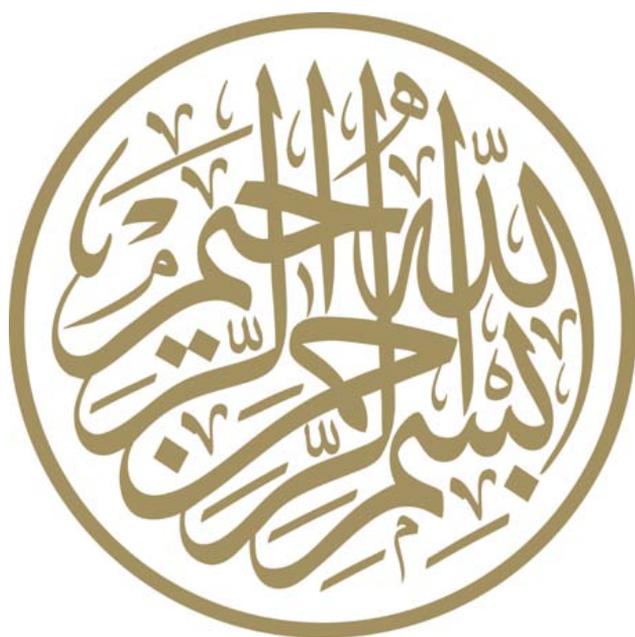
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# Foreword

Welcome to the fourth annual issue of *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims*.

There are 1.65 billion Muslims in the world today, making up approximately 23% of the world's population, or one-fifth of mankind. As well as being citizens of their respective countries, they also have a sense of belonging to the 'ummah', the worldwide Muslim community.

This publication sets out to ascertain the influence some Muslims have on this community, or on behalf of the community. Influence is: any person who has the power (be it cultural, ideological, financial, political or otherwise) to make a change that will have a significant impact on the Muslim World. Note that the impact can be either positive or negative, depending on one's point of view of course. The selection of people for this publication in no way means that we endorse their views; rather we are simply trying to measure their influence. The influence can be of a religious scholar directly addressing Muslims and influencing their beliefs, ideas and behaviour, or it can be of a ruler shaping the socio-economic factors within which people live their lives, or of artists forming popular culture. The first two examples also point to the fact that the lists, and especially the Top 50, are dominated by religious scholars and heads of state. Their dominant and lasting influence cannot be denied, especially the rulers, who in many cases also appoint religious scholars to their respective positions.

This doesn't discount the significant amount of influence from other sectors of society. The publication selects Muslim individuals from a range of categories of influence, 13 in total: (Scholarly, Political, Administration of Religious Affairs, Preachers and Spiritual Guides, Philanthropy/Charity and Development, Social Issues, Business, Science and Technology, Arts and Culture, Qur'an Reciters, Media, Celebrities and Sports and Radicals). How to measure this influence is of course the most challenging aspect of the publication, and the one where opinions diverge the most. Influence can sometimes be gauged on a quantitative basis; the

number of people influenced, the number of books written, the amount of sales etc., but more often it is related to the qualitative and lasting effect of that influence. The achievements of a lifetime are given more weight than achievements within the current year. This means that our list of names will change gradually, rather than dramatically, year-on-year.

This list acts as opportunity to shed some light on the many challenges and pioneering triumphs that are present at the very crux of shaping the Muslim community.

## What's New

This year we have an expanded introduction (more than double the size of last year's) surveying the major events in the Muslim World from the past year.

We have also expanded and reformatted our Issues of the Day section, now approximately five times larger than previous issues. For the first time we feature exclusive pieces by distinguished guest writers.

We have also added write-ups about major initiatives that have reached notable milestones in the last 12 months (see A Common Word on page 115 and Altafsir.com on page 159)

Last year we added an obituary section but fortunately this year none of our previous listees have passed away (as of printing), making it unnecessary to include for the 2012 edition.

Last year we introduced a specific section on each profile of the Top 50 on how the Arab Spring affected them. We have updated this section under the new title 'Arab Summer?'

Our website [[www.TheMuslim500.com](http://www.TheMuslim500.com)] which was launched last year has already proven to be a popular destination. We have recently updated the Influence Feed which shows the latest news on many of the Top 500. We welcome your feedback and will take nominations for the 2013 edition through it. Please subscribe to our newsletter through the website to keep posted of updates relating to our publication and website.

# Introduction

Prof. S. Abdallah Schleifer

It's over. The illusions of the previous year – the romance of a briefly bloody but relatively easy going Arab Spring, as revolutions go, and the romance of a broad democratic Consensus Triumphant led by liberal secular forces. A good deal of the credit for those illusions must be shared by liberal secular students and intellectuals as well as by much of global media with its incredible over-simplifications and never ending need for dramatic narrative – the vice of competitive journalism.

Tahrir Square, which filled with many hundreds of thousands of protestors in the dramatic days of late January and early February 2011 has dissipated over this past year not only in the numbers responding to organized demonstrations and the ultimate irrelevance of camping out at night even when tolerated by security forces. But Tahrir also degenerated as a romantic revolutionary scene. Instead, in its decline it became a setting for periodic fist fights and stone-throwing clashes between rival factions – revolutionary socialists, liberals, Muslim Brothers and Salafis; a scandalous hub for the sexual harassment of women demonstrators and women journalists; a launching pad for the Ultras, fanatic football fans for Cairo's two rival teams, Ahly and Zamalik, who welcomed opportunities to battle with the police. The Ultras finally had a good reason beyond mutual contempt to fight the police after a massacre of Ultras attending a match in Port Said, but in trying to stop the football clubs from continuing to hold matches until justice was done on behalf of the Port Said dead, the Ultras went on to storm and trash football club facilities, behaving more and more like the Fascist street fighters in 1920s Italy and 1930s Germany.

The irony is that at least one articulate left-wing Egyptian intellectual has rebranded the Ultras as a Left Revolutionary fighting force. There is reason to such fantasies: Egyptian left-wing forces, unlike the European Left during the tumultuous nineteen thirties, lack their own resilient cadre capable of battling in the streets, but the irony in such rebranding is that on at least two occasions, Ultras entered into confrontations (at approaches to the Ministry of Interior near Tahrir early in 2012 and later in the year at the US Embassy demonstration

to protest the scandalous YouTube video defaming the Prophet) organized by different Salafi factions who in any conventional Marxist political lexicon would be considered “extreme right-wing” as well as more accurately an alliance of religiously puritanical Muslims alienated from the broad wisdom of Traditional Sunni Islam.

But it is also hard for the global media to let go. When the Revolutionary Socialists called a demonstration in the early Fall against Egypt's new President Muhammed Morsi, who had led the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) to electoral victory, headlines proclaimed that “thousands” had again flocked to Tahrir. In fact barely five thousand had turned out – not the tens of thousands of workers who went out on strike in the textile industry town of Mehalla al Qubra and were fired upon by police, thereby making April 6, 2008 a hallmark in the history of unrest in Egypt and providing a name for a protest group that would play a critical role in the organization of the original Tahrir demonstrations.

## THE SYRIAN UPRISING

But residuals of the Arab Spring are also to be found in many forms and many places. Most tragically in Syria, where the death toll now far exceeds the total of all of the original dead, designated as martyrs, throughout the entire region in the 2011 Arab Spring. Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have fled the fighting; most to take shelter as refugees in the neighbouring states of Jordan and Turkey, but also to Lebanon, where many Syrians have relatives and even in Egypt where those Syrian refugees with money can settle in a new suburb outside of Cairo favoured several years ago by Sunni refugees fleeing the fighting in Iraq.

During the first months of the year much of global media was warning that Syria could turn into a sectarian civil war, when it already had, effectively, even before the beginning of 2012. But this is a very complex as well as increasingly ferocious civil war, complex almost to the point of despair.

On one hand a small and once socially outcast community, the Alawites, provides Syria's Alawite President Bashar al-Assad with the core cadre for his

air force, and for the elite army and security ground forces hard pressed in numbers for when confronting the Sunni insurgents; that is because the larger but predominantly Sunni Syrian conscript army is considered, with good reason to be unreliable. This is why the Syrian government has increasingly relied upon artillery strikes and air raids against Sunni villages and even Damascus suburbs held and/or sympathizing with the insurgents. Some of the isolated villages have been levelled by bombing runs and artillery as examples to the civilian population of the price to be paid for supporting the insurgency, and indeed some Sunni villagers are now wary, for that reason about both sides.

The Alawites were considered so heretical in past centuries as to be beyond even the broad embrace of Traditional Islam in its Sunni or Shi'a forms (see *The Muslim 500's* "Major Doctrinal Divisions in Islam," pp. 26, and note the absence of any reference to Alawites) until Bashar's father, the late Hafez al-Assad, an air force general and shrewd Baathist Minister of Defence ousted his non-Alawite rivals within the ruling Baath party in 1970 to become the first Alawite Prime Minister and then President. As President, Hafez al-Assad secured a fatwa that the Alawites were a branch of Shi'a Islam; at the same time he conspicuously prayed at Sunni mosques and at times employed a Sunni-colored political rhetoric when the regime was in serious danger, as in the last days of the 1973 War. He also moved Syria away from the more radical tenets of Baathist militant secularism and socialism, thus encouraging members of the dominant Sunni business community.

Although his regime was ruthless when dealing with opposition, particularly a violent Muslim Brotherhood opposition, Hafez al-Assad's legacy, continued by his son, included protection and public positions for Syria's various minorities: not only Christian and traditional Shi'a, but also Sufis within the Sunni community who were fearful of the anti-Sufi perspective of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood which had assumed the leadership of a Sunni movement against the regime in the 1970s.

That is why the Syrian minorities as well as many Sufis have kept their distance from the armed uprising. Nor is it clear who leads the insurgents. There are defecting Sunni career officers who with defecting Sunni enlisted men from the conscript army, set themselves up as the Free Syrian Army, but which as it turns out makes more sense if understood as a banner than a structured fighting force – a banner

for local brigades some of whom lacking military discipline have been caught on video executing Syrian Army prisoners; some brigades are led by commanders from the Muslim Brotherhood, which again appears to be asserting its leadership of Sunni opposition forces within the country and as well as abroad in exile and reportably the beneficiary of funding and the provision of small arms from Saudi Arabia and Qatar; and small but militarily effective non-Syrian jihadi fighters who are connected emotionally if not always directly to Al-Qaeda or to Salafi movements. Given this confusion within the insurgent ranks it is significant that no one rebel leader has emerged, to be recognized as such after more than a year of fighting by that significant portion of the Sunni community that supports the uprising, by Arab and global media or by the Muslim 500.

These complications also have resulted in the ambiguous American and British take on the Syrian insurgency. Over time both governments have called for Bashar al-Assad to step down and reportedly encouraged Saudi and Qatari shipment of arms to the insurgents, only to then reportedly request the Saudis and Qataris not to provide advanced weaponry (presumably sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles and field artillery) since they might fall into the hands of jihadis.

But that is the Catch 22. Without such arms, the inability to repel Syrian air force and artillery attacks will prolong the struggle; and the longer the civil war continues, not only will civilian casualties continue to climb but the greater the influence and numerical presence of foreign jihadis within the Insurgency.

#### DIFFERENCES WITH THE INTERVENTION IN LIBYA

Many Arab and Muslim supporters of intervention by Nato or at least American, British and French forces have asked quite emphatically over the past year why the West intervened so effectively in Libya, and has dallied in the case of Syria even while condemning the Assad regime for its brutalities. Some have answered themselves suggesting the difference is that Ghadafi's Libya was a major oil producer, Syria is not. But from the beginning there have been any number of other geopolitical considerations, not to mention that the Western powers and Ghadafi had already come to a viable and profitable understanding about the marketing of his oil and his curtailing a number of his more adventurous policies so Libya

would no longer be subject to political isolation in the West as a terrorist state.

Libya was in both geographical and political terms isolated from the Middle Eastern cauldron so intervention would not run the obvious destabilizing risk of intervening in a country sharing borders with Israel, Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq (which now emerges with its pro-Iranian government as a discreet ally of the Assad regime, beneficiary of Iranian largesse and an increasingly significant piece in what is perceived in some Sunni circles as a "Sh'ia Crescent")

Ghadafi had few if any allies in the Arab world, and sworn enemies throughout the region given his reputation for eccentricity bordering on madness, and his fondness for calling for the overthrow of any number of other Arab states. This was not the case with Syria; some states now bitterly opposed to the al-Assad regime, in particular Qatar, tried to use what it considered its good offices (born of large investments) in Syria to negotiate a compromise but al-Assad refused or as in other subsequent mediating missions that have multiplied over the past year, al-Assad appeared to agree and then ignored whatever understanding had been reached.

Two other critical differences: French (followed by Nato) intervention in Libya with serious support from Qatar, only took place after Arab League and more importantly, UN Security Council approval of a No-Fly Zone that effectively meant at least knocking out Ghadafi's air force and anti-aircraft capabilities. In practice it was interpreted to mean much more. The Russian and Chinese representatives at the Security Council say that they did not veto Non-Fly because it did not justify the subsequent intervention against Libyan ground forces and therefore they will not abstain this time around. But Russia also has greater stakes in Syria than it ever had in Libya. Syria is Russia's last client state in the Arab world and China with its own long term problem with peoples along its periphery seeking at least autonomy if not independence is wary of anything resembling Western military intervention.

And secondly there was significant insurgent-held territory to defend. Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, is where government troops did not merely defect but constituted the base of a Free Libyan Army, and supported insurgent civilian efforts to administer Benghazi and adjacent towns and villages. It was Benghazi which was the target of a ground and air attack that was launched with Ghadafi's promise of a massacre and had already

reached the Benghazi suburbs when the French dramatically intervened.

There is no self-liberated Benghazi to defend in Syria. And Bashar al-Assad, whatever else he may be and has actually done, is not a mad man telling the world he intends to massacre his own people.

#### AN ARAB/ISLAMIC COLD WAR

The clouds of war over Syria are further darkened by the complications of an Arab/Islamic Cold War raging for the past year and a half. Iran and its client the Lebanese Hizbollah actively support the Syrian government. This has been far more politically costly for Hizbollah, than for Iran because part of Hizbollah's extraordinary success in Lebanese politics and even its significant popularity, prior to the Uprising in Syria, among many Sunnis throughout the Arab world, had to do with Hizbollah's origin as an armed resistance movement that successfully withstood Israeli occupation and post-occupation onslaughts.

Hizbollah's leader Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah's sophisticated way of downplaying his movement's exclusively sectarian Sh'ia nature, forming a successful alliance with a political faction of the divided Lebanese Maronite Christian community and the occasional Sunni politician enhanced this image that seemed to transcend a Shi'a sectarian identity.

But with its open political support of the Syrian regime; its defence of Iran's role as an ally of the regime and the reported engagement of its fighters alongside Syrian security forces against the insurgents, Hizbollah's prestige in the Sunni Arab world as well as within Lebanon has declined, and this is reflected in the decline of Sheikh Nasrallah's standing in the Muslim 500 list.

The leadership of the Sunni side in the cold war with Iran and the Syrian regime (and by implication with his perception of an Iranian supported Shi'a threat to stability in the Gulf), is Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah. The Saudi monarch simultaneously remains active beyond the Arab world in Inter-Faith activities (in late November 2012 the King Abdullah Bin Abdel Aziz International Center for Interreligious Intercultural Dialog will be inaugurated in Vienna) and retains his position as the most influential of the Muslim 500. Equally active in support of the Syrian insurgents is Qatar's Emir, H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Aal Thani – who continues to move consistently upwards, to 5th position among the Muslim 500.

In the Fall of 2012 Sheikh Hamid engaged in a

stunning political initiative as the first Arab head of state to visit Gaza, effectively recognizing Hamas' political authority establishing a formal diplomatic presence there as well as providing financial aid and investments. This intervention has now obviously offset Iranian aid, and boosted the Gaza authorities bid for overall leadership within Hamas in the course of the power struggle with the formerly all-powerful external leader Khaled Mashal, who ironically had been the first to break with the Iranian-Syrian-Hezbollah camp because of the sectarian nature of the conflict and the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's role in the insurgency, and to transfer Hamas External headquarters to Doha, the capital of Qatar.

### TURKEY AS A MODEL

But the lines of an Arab/Islamic Cold War cannot be drawn too tightly. In recent years Turkey, under the leadership of Prime Minister Recep Erdogan has emerged as a major and inevitably controversial player in the region. On one hand he continued this past year to loosen Turkey's once tight relationship with Israel which deteriorated dramatically after Israel's "Cast-Lead" incursion into Gaza, followed more recently by Israeli Special Forces killing Turkish activists on board a flotilla defying the Israeli siege of Gaza. In previous years and acting in concert with Brazil, Prime Minister Erdogan had come up with a reasonable sounding solution for the impasse over Iran's nuclear energy problem that appeared to be acceptable to Iran but was ignored by the American government. But as early as 2011 Turkey has been increasingly drawn into the conflict in Syria, as refugees and defectors began to flee across the border with Syria. Turkey has given refuge to both, which led to the Syrian Free Army establishing headquarters and reportedly training camps in Turkey and infiltrating back into Syria. As fighting between Syrian security forces and SFA for control of Syrian villages and checkpoints along the border intensified, Syrian artillery rounds have fallen on Turkish villages. The Turkish army has responded with artillery barrages and at a recent meeting with Iranian representatives Prime Minister Erdogan made it clear that Turkey would not be intimidated by Iranian threats on behalf of its ally, the al-Assad regime.

But Turkey has also made it clear that it is in no position to directly intervene unless it is part of a Nato operation and talk has spread in both Ankara and Nato capitals of a way to end the dilemmas in-

involved in resolving the Syrian conflict – the placement by Nato of Patriot anti-aircraft missiles which would effect a No-Fly Zone nominally to protect Syrian civilians from government aircraft while also enabling the FSA to quickly establish itself by holding Syrian territory along the Turkish border without fear that its forces and the civilian population would be blown away by Syrian air power. More energetic interventions might then quickly follow as in the case of Libya including new developments in Damascus where insurgent forces have become increasingly active in the latter half of 2012.

Prime Minister Erdogan's influence has also been indirectly boosted throughout the Muslim world by the activities of the charitable foundation of Hodjaefendi Fethullah Gülen, whose large religious movement within Turkey is Sufi-inspired, and whose charitable foundation has opened primary and secondary schools across the Muslim world which transcend the differences between Muslims by focusing on science and other "secular" subjects. All of these developments have led to Prime Minister Erdogan's latest position as the second most influential Muslim in the world.

One of the on-going effects of Turkey's influence in the region has been the idea of Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party, the AKP as a model Post-Islamist political movement, whose members derive their ethical and social ideals from Islam without seeking to impose an Islamic state. Erdogan and other party leaders have denied that the AKP is an Islamist party and they compare it to the Christian Democrats of Germany and equivalent post World War Two movements in France and Italy. When Erdogan visited Tunisia and Egypt in 2012 he endorsed the secular state, obviously alluding to the American model whose Founding Fathers all invoked in one manner or another the Name of God unlike the French understanding of secularism which in its origin was openly anti-religious.

### THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD & THE SALAFIS

It is significant that Prime Minister Erdogan's advice was welcomed by the ruling Muslim Brotherhood party in Tunisia known as Ennahada which shares power in coalition with two secular parties – one leftist and one liberal and not at all welcomed, at least initially, by members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Perhaps one of the reasons for this difference is that when Ennahada emerged as

the leading party in Tunisia's parliament following free elections it had competed with a group of left and liberal secularist parties but not with a serious Salafi party claiming to be more Islamic than the Ennahada. Since those elections, a very militant and violent Salafi movement has emerged which accuses Ennahada of not being sufficiently Islamic and with Salafi factions first attacking movie theaters and bars and then attacking security forces in the latter half of 2012.

In contrast, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has to contend with a Salafi political party in parliament, el-Nour Party, that emerged in the final rounds of the first, fairly contested post-Uprising parliamentary elections, as the country's second most powerful party (24 percent of the seats and the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party with 48 percent). So even before the Presidential elections held this past June the MB/FJP was looking over its right shoulder at organized Salafi political competition and an even broader Salafi movement that has emerged in which the el-Nour party by Salafi standards (which are extreme) is relatively cautious. Indeed, but for a fascinating political manoeuvre that enabled an electoral commission staffed by Mubarak-appointed judges to disqualify three candidates for President, one of whom, Hazim Abu Ismael, was an incredibly popular, charismatic Salafi preacher, Egypt might have ended up this year with a Salafi instead of a MB/FJP leader as President.

The many Egyptian left-wing and liberal secularist parties (most of them newly formed) did poorly in the parliamentary elections. If one adds up all of their successful candidates into a "non-Islamist" total they took about 23 per cent of the seats. This shocked global media particularly since it was precisely nearly all of these parties whose leaders claimed credit for the Tahrir Uprising. The claim is an exaggeration, based in large part on the widely reported accusation that the MB did not rally to Tahrir until the last days. But that is only partially true, for while the movement did display its customary caution, the MB youth movement participated in the Tahrir Uprising from the first days and was soon organizing the Uprising's own "security" to screen out state security infiltrators who were turned over to the Army units protecting the nearby Museum. And even Ahmed Maher, whose group the April 6th Youth Movement organized the first Tahrir demonstration (and who personally remained politically relevant as a participant

in the assembly drafting Egypt's new constitution) acknowledges that the Tahrir street fighters resisting first state security forces, then thugs and the famous camel riders attacking the square, were the MB Youth as well as the Ultras who had flocked to Tahrir.

As for the Salafis (even though only a handful participated in the Tahrir Uprising) they are, however relatively small in number, the wave that has been sweeping across Egypt (and to various degrees across much of the Muslim world) which must be understood if we are to grasp the complexities of the Egyptian scene in 2012 and the uncertainties that lie ahead.

One of the main differences between the Salafis and the MB is structural. The Muslim Brotherhood, acting since Tahrir in political affairs through the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) is a disciplined ideologically-defined political movement with a time-tested cadre throughout the country and with a structure reminiscent of an effective Leninist party but using Islamic formulas to describe that structure. The equivalent of the Secretary General is the Murshid (a title derived from Sufi structure); the equivalent of the central committee is the Guidance Council and so on down the ranks. It practices an Islamicized form of what Leninists call democratic centralism. But simply as a disciplined ideological movement with cadre not only in all of Egypt, but with links within the professional syndicates (self-governing associations) and trade unions, it is as such the only serious and disciplined party now operating in Egypt.

The Muslim Brothers' ideological perspective has shifted from one that balanced the sentimental attachment of its founder, Hassan al-Banna to the Sufism of his youth, with a Salafi-influenced indifference (if not hostility) to the enduring juridical, ethical and spiritual literature of Traditional Islam that has developed over a thousand years, and well before the period of Western imperial domination of Egypt. It was during the last phase of that domination that the Muslim Brotherhood came into existence to confront it. Yet at various levels of consciousness the MB was influenced by modern Western, even revolutionary concepts as to the nature of the state as well as party structure, but its confrontational nature is often muted by an enduring political pragmatism that includes a long term perspective described by observers as "patience."

The Salafis, on the contrary are a loose movement that is more of a spontaneous association of various

factions, coalitions and sheikhs with their own personal following, than a “movement” with a clearly defined program and generally a leader or leaders working in consensus. It is not bound together by an ideology but by a general understanding that can be described as “puritanical” and “fundamentalist” for it rejects the binding nature of the traditional four schools of Islamic juridical thought in a theology most comprehensively expounded by the 18th century Arabian sheikh Muhammed ibn Abd al Wahhab. It remained a minority current within the Sunni Muslim world but it is a growing current, and it is no longer deemed as heretical as it was during the Ottoman Caliphate which is particularly ironic since a mutation of the Salafi movement mourns the end of precisely that caliphate.

So while Salafism shares the category of “Islamic Fundamentalist” with the Muslim Brotherhood and Revolutionary Shi’ism (see “Ideological Divisions, IIIb. Islamic Fundamentalism” on page 31) it differs from the latter two, which are both post-colonial developments clearly disciplined by modern Western revolutionary models. *Salafi origins* are pre-colonial, and their fundamentalism is far more theological than ideological.

Precisely in its opposition to the traditional Sunni idea that there are four different Sunni schools of juridical thought, all of whom are valid though they differ from each other in relatively minor interpretative details governing *shar’ia* in both ritual practice and manners, family law (“personal status”) and to a lesser extent commercial and criminal law, the result is that each Salafi Sheikh (and his followers) are a Salafi movement unto themselves, sharing as a defining sense and in contrast to the broad or cautious juridical interpretations of the Four Schools a stress on a literal interpretation of the Quran and frequently exaggerated interpretations of Hadith which are helpful in differentiating themselves, often in appearance from traditional Muslims.

El-Nour Party, was established by a particular faction of Salafis despite the previously prevailing perspective (and in a sense, one of the Salafis most traditional aspects) that opposed challenging the Muslim political authority as long as it did not prohibit Muslims from prayer. That is the theological reason why the movement as a whole did not participate in the Tahrir Uprising in Cairo or the other major cities. But presumably political action became justifiable in the existential absence of a ruling authority, which could be the case, but not once President Morsi had consolidated his power.

But that was the prevailing reality, after President Mubarak resigned and his last appointed cabinet was replaced by a powerless “transitional” cabinet named by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). Until the summer of 2012 it was SCAF which continued to hold all power but it did not rule (aside from stemming public protests.)

The Salafi perspective has spread in large part in Egypt because of the reach of dozens of Salafi television channels, mostly funded by Saudi and other Gulf private interests, but also by Egyptian Salafis. Because they never challenged the Mubarak regime and were seen by the regime as apolitical theological rivals to the politically engaged Muslim Brotherhood opposition, the satellite television channels were not shut down if on Egyptian territory, or jammed if originating elsewhere. In its nature, puritanical religion tends to be very intolerant of other religious forms and the virulent anti-Christian and even anti-Sufi rhetoric of some of these channels became so outrageous that the Mubarak regime in its last year, denied several Salafi channels access to the main Arab satellite platform – Nilesat.

#### IN SEARCH OF AN IDEOLOGY

Much of the Arab world but particularly Egypt (which in population constitutes at least half of the Arab world) was ideologically saturated during the nearly two decade long span of the Nasserist rule through state media, and school textbooks with Arab Nationalist-Socialist ideology. That ideology was profoundly discredited in the wake of the disastrous Arab defeat in the 1967 War. Syria and Jordan also lost territory in that war but the leadership of neither of those countries either harvested the glory in the days leading up to the war or the burden of blame as the Nasserist personification of Arab Nationalist Socialism. So Egyptians and particularly the youth in the subsequent generations have been in search of an equivalent but alternative ideology.

Given the upsurge in general religious feeling after the 1967 defeat it was first the Muslim Brotherhood and the extremist Jihadi groups that broke off from the MB which were initially the major beneficiaries. But in the past decade or so, Salafism reinforced by the satellite television channels as well as funding from abroad for the printing of inexpensive or free Salafi literature has become more dynamic, particularly because of its black-or-white theological perspectives, and the rise of self-appointed Salafi Sheikhs who by virtue of doctrine had no need for a demanding Azhari education. So both intolerance

and theological ignorance are factors in its growing appeal, along with its attractive call for a visibly dramatic pious life, that provided an opportunity to be a pious cultural rebel without having to challenge political authority as was the case with the Muslim Brotherhood.

The growing number of popular Salafi sheikhs throughout the country and their followers provided an alternative to the disciplined party ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood and thus El-Nour party was able to do so well in the parliamentary elections to nearly everyone's surprise.

The numerous newly formed secular liberal or socialist parties most insistently described themselves as the standard bearers of Tahrir; running separately they received a combined total of only 23 percent of the seats.

The most dangerous aspects of the growth of Salafism has been a mutation that breaks off, perhaps out of impatience, and merges with the revolutionary perspective that had broken off from the Muslim Brotherhood and was inspired by the most radical doctrine of Sayyid Qutb, *takfir*, turning one's Muslim opponents and particularly rulers or even entire societies into apostates who can then be killed with religious impunity, and for that reason the justification of violence against "apostate regimes" for the sake of their overthrow. This extreme mutation within the camp of Islamists or Islamist Fundamentalism has been going on for some years, producing the self-described Salafi-Jihadis of which Al-Qaeda is the standard-bearer or model. And this dangerous morphing of some Salafis into Salafi-Jihadis has become manifest elsewhere in the Muslim world over this past year. In Libya there have been a series of attacks upon Sufi shrines – the tombs of *awliya* (the Sufi "Friends of God" or Saints) where armed Salafi-Jihadis bulldozed Sufi shrines in Benghazi, Tripoli, Zitan in broad daylight while Libyan militias incorporated into the weak security apparatus stood by. In the countryside however, local people have taken up arms to defend the Sufi shrines. So too this year in northern Mali where Salafi and Salafi-Jihadi militias have seized control of Timbuktu and other cities and destroyed dozens of Sufi shrines that are centuries old, and constitute a major part of the Mali's once great traditional civilization. The Pakistani Taliban Salafi-Jihadis have bombed or burnt down Sufi shrines, and killed dozens of Pakistanis at prayer when a Taliban suicide bomber blew himself up in the mosque that incorporates the tomb of Al-Hujwiri, author of the *Kashf al-Mahjub*,

one of the oldest published works in the corpus of Sufi literature. Salafi-jihadis have also struck in the Russian Federation's Republic of Dagestan. In late August a woman suicide bomber killed Sheikh Afand Afindi, a leader of the Dagestani Sufis and five of his followers. Only a month earlier, in another autonomous and predominantly Muslim republic, a senior traditional Muslim leader of Tartarstan was assassinated and the republic's Grand Mufti was wounded in a bomb attack.

### THE ELECTION OF AN EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT

The second shock for the numerous (and many newly formed) secular liberal or socialist parties that did so poorly in the parliamentary elections was the outcome of the Presidential elections. The highest votes in the first round, which included a large field of candidates were the MB/FJP's Muhammed Morsi and the last Mubarak appointed Prime Minister, Ahmed Shafik.

Again there was a very divided political field consisting of a Nasserist, other leftists, a moderate Islamist expelled by the MB who drew some significant support from those left-wing and liberal intellectuals who had suddenly become aware, after the parliamentary results, how politically unavoidable it was for a candidate to have some sort of prominent Islamic identity, and a very well known former foreign minister under Mubarak whose independent streak, which included showing up at Tahrir during the Uprising, gave him credibility. These last two candidates were considered by pollsters as the leading candidates.

But however relatively unknown Morsi was, as a last minute substitute candidate (he had ranked poorly in the polls that involved individual candidate name recognition not party affiliation), he was the candidate of the sole significant organized political party that took him to the top of the first round and this time around running without Salafi competition.

As for Shafik he was the beneficiary of two underestimated (by nearly everyone) currents. Prior to Mubarak's fall from power, there were two organized and disciplined parties, not only one, in Egypt. The other was the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) which was bound together not by ideology but by patronage.

It was President Mubarak who headed the party, and its top leadership consisted of his son, and those closest to him in governing the country and

in the last decade or more, starring in its crony version of Neo-Liberal capitalism. Anyone in the cabinet, with rare exceptions, was a member of the NDP and certainly the appointed governors were all in the party or responsive to it. And it had a cadre throughout the country – major sectors of government employees (and in Egypt, despite extensive privatization, the largest single employer remains the government with its absurdly swollen bureaucracy.)

When Mubarak and his family were ushered off the political stage by the armed forces the party as a structure collapsed, so the NDP could not be mobilized as a party to run in the parliamentary elections. But the cadre and all the vast number of dependent relatives of the cadre remained and deeply concerned about their future. They all went for Shafik.

Equally as significant they were joined by a surprising number of the urban working class who were not members or under the influence of the MB. This large number were exhausted by the prevailing instability, the listless commercial climate, especially tourist-related and thus the growing unemployment (already bad under Mubarak) and relative lawlessness that was particularly virulent in vulnerable neighbourhoods – working class and thus least likely to be patrolled by police in ordinary times and totally abandoned during the year and half when Egypt had no government, and which has only begun to function in the administrative sense, (however sluggishly), since the election of President Morsi.

From the point of view of many working class people the struggle to put food on the table for their families took priority over liberal democracy or the claims of Islamism.

In the second round of the Presidential elections the liberal democratic camp split, students, intellectuals, the upper class and much of the upper middle class, depending on which they feared more, the MB or the “the old regime.” Even Ahmed Shafik declared that “the clock could not be turned back;” he too supported “the Revolution.” One more indication, if *everybody* supports the revolution, that there was no revolution.

But some of the more militant left and liberal opposition opted out – they would not vote for either candidate.

Morsi benefited in the second round of voting, from endorsements by many of the leaders of Tahrir, but nevertheless Shafik carried Cairo, despite losing to Morsi nationwide, according to the official

results which were delayed by a week for investigations, since both sides accused each other of ballot box fraud; which was not the case in the parliamentary elections or even the presidential first round.

Most people, including Al Ahram online and the reputable privately owned newspaper *Masri al Youm* believed that Morsi had won on the basis of combined unofficially announced results from the thousands of polling stations available within 24 hours, and neither publication could be considered part of the Morsi camp. But to this day Shafik and his camp contest the results, and they argue with a degree of plausibility that the U.S. government with its extraordinary influence upon the armed forces (which at that moment remained the only power in Egypt) prevailed upon the Army to prevail upon the Electoral Commission to find for Morsi. And not just to avoid the bloodshed which could be expected since on the basis of the early unofficial results the MB cadre and many other anti-old regime elements would take to the streets. But the Shafik camp would argue it was more than fear. Official American strategy has been shifting slowly over the past decade, accelerating since Obama’s victory in 2008, to an assumption that only moderate Islamists have a popular following and thus the capacity to decisively crush jihadi currents.

But what was perceptible from the time of the parliamentary elections spanning 2011 and the beginning to 2012 until the Presidential elections nearly six months later, was the apparent decline of Muslim Brotherhood/FJP support. This was reflected in the number of votes it had taken in the parliamentary elections even though it was competing with a Salafi party, compared to the lesser numbers it took in the first round of the Presidential elections more than five months later, when all of the other candidates besides Morsi and Shafik (and without a Salafi candidate running for president, had a combined total in the first round of 40 per cent of the vote. In part this was because much was expected by the public of a parliament unable at that time to legislate and whose daily televised debates seemed trivial to the public with its high expectations.

So the assumption was that President Morsi and by association, the MB/FJP would continue to lose popularity. But the opposite appears to be true, and in large part that is because many of the most immediate fears among many of Shafik’s constituencies have not come to pass.

The Salafist El Nour Party was offered only one ministry out of 36 – that of environment, which

they refused as insufficient and have not entered the government. The Prime Minister, although widely believed to be sympathetic to the Brotherhood, is a technocrat who served as minister of irrigation in the SCAF-approved transitional cabinet. MB members took only five posts – three of which are politically sensitive – the ministries of information, higher education, and manpower but most of the cabinet is made up of technocrats, who are long term state employees, and at least six are former ministers.

The new Minister of the Interior is a senior police officer, and the Minister of Defence was initially the more-or-less self-appointed head of SCAF. There have been no purges of the bureaucracy, nor of the universities. The editors and directors of state-owned media have been changed by the MB-dominated Shura Council (or upper house) which is constitutionally responsible for this oversight, but it is in the nature of state media, which has lost much of its viewer and readership base over the past few years to liberal or Salafi private sector competition, to follow power in any case. That meant throughout the transitional power state media promoted the SCAF rather than the parliament and continued to do even after Morsi was confirmed as President until a series of dramatic events altered the balance.

There are no representatives of the secular parties in the cabinet but Morsi did consult with them upon taking office and it is the secularist leaders who by and large claim it was they who chose not to serve under Morsi so the burden for the failure to form a broad coalition appears to fall on them.

Morsi's left and liberal secular opponents also severely underestimated President Morsi's political skills and failed by and large to acknowledge his accomplishments.

For many months after the fall of Mubarak and prior to taking office Morsi and the MB were constantly accused of appeasing SCAF, of not participating in most of the continuing (if slowly diminishing in numbers) Tahrir demonstrations against SCAF; although it was obvious that the MB was focusing the energies of its cadre on mobilizing the public for parliamentary and later presidential elections. Between the first and second round of the presidential vote when SCAF issued decrees granting itself broad legislative and executive powers including the right to veto any article in the new constitution being prepared by a constituent assembly appointed by the MB dominated parliament to draft a new constitution, Morsi still avoided confrontation.

Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court had already disbanded the freely-elected parliament on technical grounds and demanded that it was they who would swear-in Morsi, who yielded on the point but convened the disbanded parliament for only one day for a symbolic swearing in, and then proceeded to the Court for the swearing-in ceremony.

Morsi was aware from the time of Tahrir that factions existed within SCAF – most significant for him, that faction of younger generals in their fifties concerned both by a sense of professionalism as well as ambition about the quality of leadership provided by the significantly older generals running SCAF and in the highest echelon of rank for the duration of Mubarak's three decades of rule. Morsi's time came on August 5th when a band of Jihadis operating in the Sinai attacked an Egyptian military post on the border with Israel surprising 16 Egyptian soldiers and killing them in what appears to have been cold blood, and then with captured Army vehicles crashing across the border where they were wiped out by the Israelis.

For SCAF this was a great humiliation; for Morsi it was time to make his move. Defense Minister and head of SCAF Field Marshal Tantawi and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Anan were summoned to the Presidential palace on August 12th, at the very moment the Official Gazette published a Presidential decree annulling SCAF's own decree back in June awarding itself extra-constitutional powers and greatly reducing Morsi's. While the generals waited in one room, Morsi was in another, swearing in a new Defense Minister General Al-Sisi from the Army command's younger generation; then Morsi informed Tantawi and Anan that they were dismissed. But in a politically astute gesture, no doubt not appreciated by Tahrir purists who had been fruitlessly demonstrating for Tantawi's dismissal for months, Morsi appointed them as military advisers to the Presidency and awarded them the Nile Medal of Honor, Egypt's highest service award.

Barely two months later Morsi would again award two Nile Medals of Honor, this time, as posthumous awards to the late President Anwar Sadat and his brilliant Chief of Staff Saad El-Shazli (who had planned and directed Egyptian armed forces as they smashed across the Suez Canal and overran the Bar Lev Line in the first hours of the October 1973 War, and successfully resisted Israeli counter-attacks for more than a week.) It was still another public signal that this time righted the balance: a rebuke

to both Mubarak and his former top ranking officers in SCAF during Mubarak's rule, for while Sadat and El-Shazli had quarrelled over Sadat's disastrous intervention in the conduct of the October War, it was Mubarak who sent El-Shazli to prison and eradicated from Egyptian military history and all state media accounts, General El-Shazli's role in the October War. Morsi also ordered, not long after the high-command shake-up, that all civilians held in military prisons for political reasons be released.

Officially the armed forces have returned to the barracks but political realism also prevails – senior officers still have a share determining the issues that most directly effects them as members of a body approximating (but going beyond the authority) of the American National Security Council. Headed by Morsi and including key cabinet members, nevertheless the military services predominate, and it is the council which has the power to declare war and review the military budget.

At the same time Morsi scored a series of diplomatic victories.

Saudi Arabia had provided financial and moral support to both President Mubarak and the Egyptian Salafis. Saudi rulers have been uneasy for some time about the Muslim Brotherhood and in particular the political activism of MB branches in Arabia and some of the other Gulf countries, so Saudi support for the Salafis continued after the fall of Mubarak. But in a gesture for reconciliation Morsi's first trip abroad as President was to visit King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

However his most dramatic voyage was one in which he first defied America and Israel by traveling to Teheran for the Non-Aligned Conference, only to stay long enough to confront his host Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, by declaring Egypt's support for the Syrian Uprising. In one bold stroke he had re-established a leading position for Egypt in regional affairs and demonstrated independence from both the pro-Assad Iranian camp and the Israeli-American camp.

Of course Morsi and the Brotherhood have been criticized for accommodating large administrative segments of the old regime, but the trade off has been a significant return of the police to the streets and a reduction in criminal activity – not just street crime, but also the smuggling of subsidized diesel fuel and petrol to Libya and a crack down on officials implicated in the smuggling, which had led to disruptive supplies of fuel and periodic electricity blackout – these major problems were starting to

subside towards the end of 2012.

And in part because of the improved security environment, significant Qatari direct funding to offset the deficit, as well as Qatari and Saudi investments and the new government's negotiations for a very low-interest carry over loan and willingness to maintain the pro-privatization policies of the previous regime (but promising that this time around there will be transparency) Egypt's wealthy are beginning to bring their capital back and the purchase of Egyptian government bonds by Egyptian investors had resumed since the Fall of 2012.

But even a transparent Neo-Liberalism instead of the crony capitalism of the Mubarak era, and the Prime Minister's announcement that a modest progressive income tax system will soon come into effect, as well as a very modest limited capital gains tax, does not deal with the immediate crisis of scandalous low public sector pay scales (young doctors who have neither the money to open private clinics or the *wasta* (influence) to secure jobs in private hospitals at decent pay, are working in a broken public health program for just under \$100 a month. It is unimaginable what nurses and orderlies are receiving and its incites a literally deadly cynicism and corruption within public health facilities. So in the closing months of 2012 there has been a wide-scale wave of strikes and highway blockades, nor is there any sign as yet of serious labour-intensive public works projects that would immediately generate employment and reduce the social discontent that was already expressing itself in the first round of the presidential elections. That is why a relatively obscure Nasserist, but on record for human rights and who combined his criticism of Islamism with public appearances at prayer in mosques, came in a close third drawing strong working class support and ahead of far better known candidates.

President Morsi has additional problems to confront. Salafi extremism which led to destructive attacks against churches and Sufi shrines in 2011 has morphed this past year into more personal vigilante attacks on members of the general Egyptian population. Most notoriously a young man walking with his fiancé in Suez City, was stabbed to death when he challenged two Salafis who had surrounded the couple and demanded proof that they were married. The government has denounced this attack and the killers in this particular incident were arrested and brought to trial but the sentence of 15 years imprisonment seems light for an act of murder. Mundane quarrels between a Christian and a Muslim are

transformed into acts of collective punishment by Salafi activists who intervene and destroy Christian-owned shops and homes in villages. A Salafi sheikh who burned a copy of the Bible during the demonstrations against the U.S. Embassy in Cairo was arrested and charged with blasphemy. There has been on-going Salafi denunciations of Egypt's Grand Mufti, His Eminence Dr. Ali Goma'a as well as the Sheikh Al-Azhar University His Eminence Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb – both of whom are known to be Sufis. Sheikh Al-Azhar is more vulnerable since there has been on-going agitation against him among both Azhari students and young Azhari graduate Imams who are reportedly associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and are calling for “reform.” This has deepened fears that the MB is seeking to take over *the* Sunni theological center and citadel of Traditional Islam.

### ATHEISM, TAHRIR & THE FACEBOOK GENERATION

Less visible but a growing problem for the middle-aged and educated classes is the spread of an open, articulated atheism among their children – be they teenage or young adult – members of what one might certainly call the Facebook Generation. Within the Arab world this is not exclusively an Egyptian problem, but it is particularly problematic in Egypt. It is in part the other side of the Islamist and Salafi coin, for without the spiritual resources that traditional Islamic culture provided, many of the educated young who find political Islam spiritually shallow and the increasing vigilante violence of Salafi currents in Libya, Mali, and Pakistan as well as in Egypt deeply disturbing, are choosing atheism as the other side of the coin.

Moez Masoud is one of the generation of contemporary-sounding and contemporary-looking young television preachers who have emerged as public figures in the region over the past decade, and whose message has been categorised in some insightful journalism, as “sweet orthodoxy”. An Honourable Mention in the Muslim 500, he has intellectually engaged more than any of the other “new preachers” with his young audience about highly personal issues that would be understandably appalling to traditional *ulema*, but are being voiced by young Egyptians who have been shaped by a strong secular global youth culture yet remain believers and have called out for help. He believes that there is more to this emerging new phenomenon than just a reaction to puritanical and/or political Islam.

He alludes to the implicit atheist content of much of the popular culture that is part of globalization (satellite TV and the Internet) and in the sudden flurry of explicitly atheist writing by Richard Dawkins and the late Christopher Hitchens, whose books were best sellers in the West. Their work has reached the educated English-speaking Egyptian youth and feeds into the romance of rebellion, where according to Moez (who kept a cautious but supportive presence in Tahrir during all of the critical 18 days in 2011) “there is an impulse to do away with all that is perceived to be outdated and useless.” This past year Moez reached out to the large audience he has for his nightly Ramadan program “A Journey to Certitude” which appeared on the influential post-Tahrir Egyptian satellite channel CBC and is posted on YouTube.

The problem transcends the immediate ones facing President Morsi, but it is bound to increasingly resonate in Egypt.

In Palestine the situation continues to deteriorate. Settlements continue to expand in the West Bank be it on Palestinian land which is privately owned, or on so-called “state land” as if a military occupation's seizure of land previously held by the Jordanian governing authority, could ever be legal. And research undertaken by the Israel newspaper Haaretz this year establishes that as many as a quarter of a million Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza who have studied abroad for more than seven years have been deprived by the Israeli Occupation military authorities of their residency rights in Palestine.

But it is in Arab Jerusalem where conditions have been particularly difficult and 78 percent of the Palestinians in Arab Jerusalem now live below the poverty line. Of course this is in large part the direct result of Israeli occupation policies implemented since the 1967 War including most recently the extension of the Wall and security check points reducing commercial traffic between Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank. Of course the pressure upon the Palestinians in Arab Jerusalem to give up, abandon the city and seek refuge elsewhere are tremendous, and this temptation is further heightened by the significant amounts of money being offered to Palestinians by Israeli settler groups, to abandon their homes, particularly in what is known as “the Muslim Quarter” in the Old City, so that Israeli settlers, generally militant religious-Zionists, can move into these properties.

But part of the problem is the Arab boycott of

pilgrimage to the Noble Sanctuary (*Al Haram Al Sharif*) which contains within its walls both Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and other sites as well, all perfumed by the *baraka* – the spiritual grace – that traces back to the presence of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and many of the other Prophets cited in the Qur'an. Arab Jerusalem has been a pilgrimage city for centuries and like any pilgrimage city, the living economy is sustained by the pilgrims who stay in Palestinian hotels and hostels, eat in Palestinian restaurants and buy souvenirs from the Holy City from Palestinian shopkeepers to take home for friends and family. To boycott the pilgrimage is to be an accomplice to the slow but on-going Israeli economic strangulation and ethnic cleansing of Arab Jerusalem and to abandon the Haram Al-Sharif.

That is why the one hopeful event this past year in Palestine was the pilgrimage undertaken by the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Goma'a and H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammed, Chief Religious Advisor to Jordan's King Abdullah II in response to the call by Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas at a meeting of the Arab League for Muslims to make pilgrimage to Al-Aqsa Mosque; a call echoed by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and Palestine, His Eminence Sheikh Muhammed Ahmad Husein, who issued a fatwa approving the pilgrimage.

Along with the pilgrimage, Egypt's Mufti and H.R.H. Prince Ghazi inaugurated the King Abdullah II Awqaf in Jerusalem which will not only fund a university chair for Al-Ghazali studies in association with Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds University but will also provide scholarships for Palestinians to study at Al-Quds University. This is not the useless words of a useless boycott; this is real support for the Palestinian people trying to hold on in the Holy City.

Finally we would note that there has been some criticism of the over-representation of Muslims from the West or living in the West in *The Muslim 500*, specifically from the point of view that they are not that influential in the Muslim world. We would note that the full title of this annual edition is *The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims*, and also note that it is not defined as influential "solely in the Muslim World" but as now implied and originally stated (2009 first edition) "in the world."

We all increasingly inhabit, breathe the very air, of an increasingly globalized society and a reflection of this is the sad fact that the lingua franca or sec-

ond language by which the educated Muslims from one end of the Islamic world to the other, as well as the educated Muslims living in the West increasingly communicate with each other is English and not classical Arabic. The impact of Muslim scholars and intellectuals living in the West, many of them converts, and writing in English (or in many cases, as scholars lecturing live or talking via television in fluent Arabic), has been, and increasingly will be, of great significance among the educated elite in the Muslim world: that impact in its own way is as important as the impact of traditional religious scholars in the Muslim world (in some cases increasingly besieged) or political and cultural leaders.

We should also note that 2012 was the 5th Anniversary of the launching of the "A Common Word" interfaith initiative (see pages 115, 175 and [www.ACommonWord.com](http://www.ACommonWord.com)), which affirms is the love of God and love of the neighbour.) One of the most powerful highlights of that on-going initiative took place in December 2009 when 24 Muslim scholars and intellectuals drawn from and representing the original 128 signers of "A Common Word" met in the Vatican at the First Catholic-Muslim Forum" with 24 outstanding Catholic prelates, theologians and academics. Eight papers were read during two and a half days of closed sessions, and became the basis of the dialogue. Summaries were then passed on to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, who received and addressed all of the delegates on the third day.

The papers delivered by the Muslim delegation were outstanding and deeply impressed the Catholic delegation. One was presented by an Iranian scholar who has lived in America for nearly 35 years and as a young man studied at MIT and Harvard (Dr Seyyed Hossein Nasr); the other three by a British scholar and convert (Sheikh Abdul Hakim Murad aka T.J. Winter) and two American converts Sheikh Hamza Yusuf and Dr Ingrid Mattson). The majority of the Muslim delegation resided in the East but interestingly the head of the delegation was His Eminence Sheikh Mustafa Ceric, the Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a European Muslim. On the third day the combined delegations were received by H.H. Pope Benedict who embraced the concept of "A Common Word" (initially the Vatican was cool to the very concept and in his remarks to the Forum he invoked the name of "God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate" the English version of the Quran's Arabic invocation. On other occasions including a subsequent

and important visit to Jordan, Pope Benedict reaffirmed his support.

This ability of Western Muslims to communicate most effectively with Christians and Jews in the West is of critical importance at a time when extremists, be they Muslim, Christian or Jewish, continue their efforts to provoke the now proverbial “Clash of Civilizations.” The role of Muslim scholars, intellectuals, and cultural figures residing in the West and influencing both the West and the Muslims of the world to overcome these provocations and to seek to live in peace based on a mutual respect that is anchored in “A Common World”, is, we suggest, of critical importance.



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❧ The ❧  
HOUSE  
OF ISLAM

# I. The House of Islam

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(with the exception of President Obama's speech)

The religion of Islam is based on belief in the One God (who in Arabic is called Allah). It was founded by the Prophet Muhammad (570-632 CE) in the ancient cities of Mecca and Medina, in the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula (known as the Hijaz). God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad the Holy Qur'an, the Sacred Book of Islam. The religion this created, however, was not a new message but simply a final restatement of God's messages to the Hebrew Prophets and to Jesus.

The Holy Qur'an says:

*Say ye: we believe in God and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have submitted. (2:136)*

Moreover, the Holy Qur'an did not exclude the possibility of revelations other than those that were given to the Prophets mentioned in the Bible (and thus did not exclude the possibility of other genuine ancient religions other than Judaism, Christianity and Islam). God says, in the Holy Qur'an:

*Verily we have sent Messengers before thee [O Muhammad]. About some of them have we told thee, and about some have we not told thee ... (40:78).*

*And verily we have raised in every nation a Messenger [proclaiming]: serve God and shun false gods ... (16:36).*

## The Essence of Islam

The essence and substance of Islam can be easily summed up by three major principles (which are also successive stages in the spiritual life): Is-

lam (meaning 'submission to God's will'); Iman (meaning 'faith in God'), and Ihsan (meaning 'virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of, God'). The second Caliph, the great 'Umar ibn al Khattab, related that:

*One day when we were sitting [in Medina] with the Messenger of God [the Prophet Muhammad] there came unto us a man whose clothes were of exceeding whiteness and whose hair was of exceeding blackness, nor were there any signs of travel upon him, although none of us knew him. He sat down knee upon knee opposite the Prophet, upon whose thighs he placed the palms of his hands, saying: 'O Muhammad; tell me what is the surrender (Islam)'. The Messenger of God answered him saying: 'The surrender is to testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger, to perform the prayer, bestow the alms, fast Ramadan and make if thou canst, the pilgrimage to the Holy House.' He said, 'Thou hast spoken truly,' and we were amazed that having questioned him he should corroborate him. Then he said: 'Tell me what is faith (Iman)'. He answered: 'To believe in God and His Angels and his Books and His Messengers and the Last Day [the Day of Judgement], and to believe that no good or evil cometh but by His Providence.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' he said, and then: 'Tell me what is excellence (Ihsan)'. He answered: 'To worship God as if thou sawest Him, for if Thou seest Him not, yet seest He thee.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' he said...Then the stranger went away, and I stayed a while after he had gone; and the Prophet said to me: 'O 'Umar, knowest thou the questioner, who he was?' I said, 'God and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'It was Gabriel [the Archangel]. He came unto you to teach you your religion.'<sup>1</sup>*

Thus Islam as such consists of 'five pillars': (1)

<sup>1</sup> Sahih Muslim, 'Kitab al Iman', I, N.I. (The Hadiths of the Prophet (ﷺ), like all sacred texts, are written above in italics).

the Shahadatayn or the ‘two testimonies of faith’ (whose inward meaning is the acknowledgement of God). (2) The five daily prayers (whose inward meaning is the attachment to God). (3) Giving alms or Zakat—one-fortieth of one’s income and savings annually to the poor and destitute (whose inward meaning is the detachment from the world). (4) Fasting the Holy month of Ramadan annually (whose inward meaning is detachment from the body and from the ego). (5) Making the Hajj (whose inner meaning is to return to one’s true inner heart, the mysterious square, black-shrouded Ka’ba in Mecca being the outward symbol of this heart). Thus also Iman as such consists of belief in all the essential doctrines of religion (and the inner meaning of this is that one should not go through the motions of religion and of the five pillars of Islam blindly or robotically, but rather have real faith and certainty in one’s heart). Thus, finally, *Ihsan* as such consists in believing that God always sees us, and therefore that one must be virtuous and sincere in all one’s actions. In this connection the Prophet said: ‘By Him in whose Hand is my Life, none of you believes till he loves for his neighbour what he loves for himself.’<sup>2</sup> In summary, we could say that the essence of Islam is exactly the Two Commandments upon which Jesus said hangs all the Law and the Prophets:

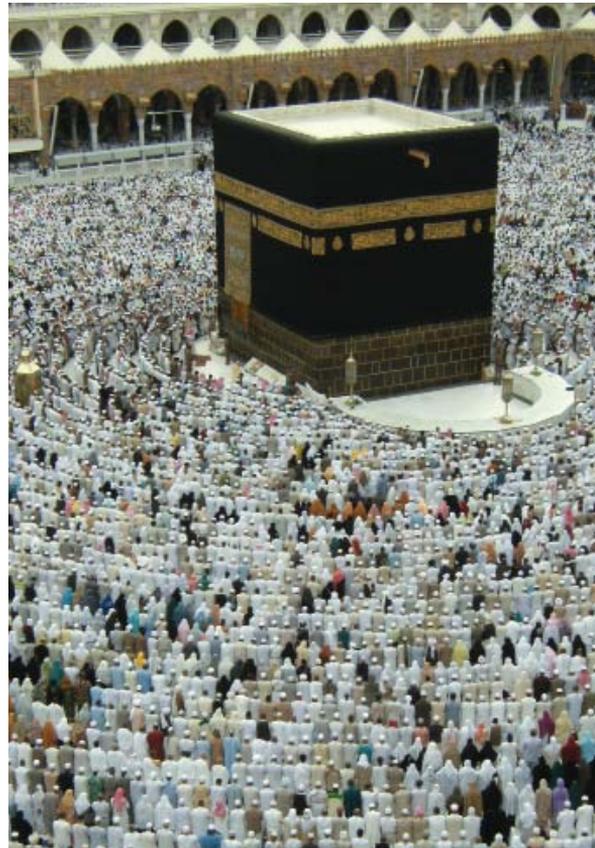
And Jesus answered him, The first of all commandments is...the Lord our God is one Lord; And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy understanding, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second commandment is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.<sup>3</sup>

### The Canon of Islam

Islam does not, like Christianity, have a clergy. There is no temporal or even spiritual institute that holds it together or unifies it. So how has it held together—and indeed, flourished—for the last fourteen centuries approximately, when its scholars and temporal policymakers keep changing and dying out over time? How has it remained so homogene-

ous that the Islam of 1900 CE was doctrinally exactly the same as the Islam of 700 CE? Where have its internal checks and balances come from?

The answer is that Islam has a traditional canon:<sup>4</sup> a collection of sacred texts which everyone has agreed are authoritative and definitive, and which ‘fix’ the principles of belief, practice, law, theology and doctrine throughout the ages. All that Muslim scholars (called *ulema* and muftis or sheikhs and imams) have left to do is to interpret these texts and work out their practical applications and details (and the principles of interpretation and elaboration are themselves ‘fixed’ by these texts), so that in Islam a person is only considered learned to the extent that he can demonstrate his knowledge of these texts. This does not mean that Islam is a religion of limitations for these texts are a vast ocean and their principles can be inwardly worked out almost infinitely in practice. It does mean, however, that Islam is ‘fixed’ and has certain limits beyond which it will not go. This is an extremely important concept to



2 Sahih Muslim, ‘Kitab al Iman’, 18, n. 72.

3 The Gospel according to Mark 12:29–31. (See also Deuteronomy 6:5; and Matthew 22:37–40).

4 Even the English word ‘canon’ comes from the Arabic word *kanun* meaning ‘law’ or ‘principle’.

understand, because misunderstanding it, and setting aside the traditional canon of Islam, leads to people killing and assassinating others in the name of religion. The traditional canon of Islam is what protects not just the religion of Islam itself, but the world (including Muslims themselves) from terrorism, murder and oppression in the name of Islam. The canon is Islam's internal check and balance system; it is what safeguards its moderation; it is 'self-censorship' and its ultimate safety feature.

To be more specific, the traditional Sunni Islamic Canon starts with the Qur'an itself; then the great traditional Commentaries upon it (e.g. Tabari; Razi; Zamakhshari/Baydawi; Qurtubi; Jalalayn; Ibn Kathir; Nasafi; and al Wahidi's *Asbab al Nuzul*); then the eight traditional collections of Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet, (e.g. Muslim; Bukhari; Tirmidhi; Ibn Hanbal, al Nasa'i; Al-Sijistani; Al-Darimi and Ibn Maja); the later Muhaddithin, or Traditionists (e.g. Bayhaqi; Baghawi; Nawawi and 'Asqalani); then the traditional biographical and historical works of Sira (Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd, Waqidi; Azraqi; Tabari; and Suhayli); the *Risala* of Al-Shafi'i: the *Muwatta'* of Imam Malik; the *Ihya' 'Ulum al Din* of Ghazali; Ash'arite and Maturidian theology; the (original) 'Aqida of Tahawi; Imam Jazuli's *Dala'il al-Khayrat*, and finally—albeit only extrinsically—Jahiliyya poetry (as a background reference for the semantic connotations of words in the Arabic language).



We give a specific (but not exhaustive) list here in order to minimize the possibility of misunderstanding.

### Islam in History

It is evidently not possible to do justice to the role of Islam in world history, thought and civilization in a few words, but the following paragraph by Britain's Prince Charles attempts it:

'The medieval Islamic world, from Central Asia to the shores of the Atlantic, was a world where scholars and men of learning flourished. But because we have tended to see Islam as the enemy, as an alien culture, society, and system of belief, we have tended to ignore or erase its great relevance to our own history. For example, we have underestimated the importance of eight hundred years of Islamic society and culture in Spain between the 8th and 15th centuries. The contribution of Muslim Spain to the preservation of classical learning during the Dark Ages, and to the first flowerings of the Renaissance, has long been recognized. But Islamic Spain was much more than a mere larder where Hellenistic knowledge was kept for later consumption by the emerging modern Western world. Not only did Muslim Spain gather and preserve the intellectual content of ancient Greek and Roman civilization,



it also interpreted and expanded upon that civilization, and made a vital contribution of its own in so many fields of human endeavour—in science, astronomy, mathematics, algebra (it self an Arabic word), law, history, medicine, pharmacology, optics, agriculture, architecture, theology, music. Averroes [Ibn Rushd] and Avenzoar [Ibn Zuhr], like their counterparts Avicenna [Ibn Sina] and Rhazes [Abu Bakr al Razi] in the East, contributed to the study and practice of medicine in ways from which Europe benefited for centuries afterwards.’<sup>5</sup>

On 4 June, 2009, US President Barack Obama said the following at Cairo University:

‘As a student of history, I also know civilization’s debt to Islam. It was Islam—at places like Al-Azhar—that carried the light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe’s Renaissance and Enlightenment. It was innovation in Muslim communities that developed the order of algebra; our magnetic compass and tools of navigation; our mastery of pens and printing; our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed. Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation. And throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.

I also know that Islam has always been a part of America’s story. The first nation to recognize my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty of Tripoli in 1796, our second President, John Adams, wrote, ‘The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Muslims.’ And since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, they have served in our government, they have stood for civil rights, they have started businesses, they have taught at our universities, they’ve excelled in our sports arenas, they’ve won Nobel Prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic Torch. And when the first Muslim American was recently elected to Congress, he took the oath to defend our Constitution using the same Holy Koran that one of our Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson—kept in his personal library.’<sup>6</sup>

5 HRH the Prince of Wales, ‘Islam and the West’, a lecture given at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford on October 27th, 1993, pp.17–18.

6 Barack Obama’s speech in Cairo, ‘Remarks by the President on a New Beginning’ June 4, 2009.

TOP LEFT: A manuscript of Jazuli’s Dalail Al-Khayrat  
LEFT: Alhambra Palace in Spain  
RIGHT: Al-Azhar Mosque

# II. Major Doctrinal Divisions Within Islam

## Sunni Theology

### 1) Ash'ari and Maturidi Schools: Sunni Orthodoxy<sup>1</sup>

These two schools of doctrine are followed by the bulk of Sunni Muslims and differ only in minor details.

**Ash'ari School:** This school is named after the followers of the 9th century scholar **Abu al Hasan al Ash'ari** (874–936 CE) and is widely accepted throughout the Sunni Muslim world. They believe that the characteristics of God are ultimately beyond human comprehension, and trust in the Revelation is essential, although the use of rationality is important.

**Maturidi School:** This school is named after the followers of the 9th century scholar **Muhammad Abu Mansur al Maturidi** (853–944 CE) and has a wide following in regions where Hanafi law is practiced. They have a slightly more pronounced reliance on human reason.

### 2) Salafi School

This school was developed around the doctrines of 18th century scholar **Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab** (1703–1792 CE). Salafis have specific doctrinal beliefs, owing to their particular interpretation of Islam, that differentiate them from the majority of Sunnis, such as a literal anthropomorphic interpretation of God. Salafis place a great emphasis on literal interpretation of the Qur'an and *Hadith*, with skepticism towards the role of human reason in theology.

### 3) Mu'tazili School

This school was developed between the 8th and 10th centuries. Although it is traced back to **Wasil ibn Ata** (d. 748 CE) in Basra, theologians **Abu al Hudhayl al 'Allaf** (d. 849 CE) and **Bishr ibn al Mu'tamir** (d. 825 CE) are credited with formalizing its theological stance. Mu'tazili thought relies heavily on logic, including Greek philosophy. Although it no longer has a significant following, a small minority of contemporary intellectuals have sought to revive it. Mutazilites believe that the Qur'an was created as opposed to the Orthodox Sunni view that it is eternal and uncreated. Moreover they advocate using rationalism to understand allegorical readings of the Qur'an.

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<sup>1</sup> Orthodoxy in Islam is based on verse 2:285 of the Holy Qur'an, and has been best defined by the historical 2005 international Islamic consensus on the 'three points' of the Amman Message (see: the Amman Message at the end of this section):

## Shi'a Theology

### 1) The Twelver School

The infallibility (*'Ismah*) of the Twelve Imams descended from the family of the Prophet (*Ahl al-Bayt*) who are believed to be the spiritual and rightful political authorities of the Muslim community (*Umma*). The twelfth Imam, the Mahdi, is believed to be in occultation to return in the future.

### 2) Isma'ili School

The Qur'an and *Hadith* are said to have truths lying with a single living Imam, descended directly from the Prophet. Also known as 'seveners' for their belief that Isma'il ibn Ja'far was the seventh and final leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

### 3) Zaidi School

The infallibility of the Twelve Imams and the notion of occultation are rejected in favor of accepting the leadership of a living Imam. The Imamate can be held by any descendant of the Prophet (*Sayyid*). Also known as 'fivers' for their belief that Zayd ibn Ali was the fifth and final leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

## Ibadi Theology

### Ibadi School

Ibadis believe that God created the Qur'an at a certain point in time, and that God will not be seen on the Day of Judgment. They also believe in the eternal nature of hell for all those who enter it.

# III. Ideological Divisions

## Traditional Islam

(96% of the world's Muslims)

Also known as Orthodox Islam, this ideology is not politicized and largely based on consensus of correct opinion—thus including the Sunni, Shi'a, and Ibadi branches of practice (and their subgroups) within the fold of Islam, and not groups such as the Druze or the Ahmadiyya, among others.

## Islamic Fundamentalism

(3% of the world's Muslims)

This is a highly politicized religious ideology popularized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century through movements within both the Shi'a and Sunni branches of Islam—characterized by aggressiveness and a reformist attitude toward traditional Islam.

## Islamic Modernism

(1% of the world's Muslims)

Emerging from 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Turkey and Egypt, this subdivision contextualized Islamic ideology for the times—emphasizing the need for religion to evolve with Western advances.

## IIIa. Traditional Islam

### Sunni (90% of the world's traditional muslims)

The largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Ahl as Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah* or 'people of the prophetic tradition and community'—with emphasis on emulating the life of the last Prophet, Muhammad.

### Schools of Sunni Islamic Law

#### Hanafi (45%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Abu Hanifa** (699–767 CE/ 89–157 AH) in Iraq.

#### Shafi'i (28%)

Named after the followers of **Imam al Shafi'i** (767–820 CE/ 150–204 AH) in Medina.

#### Maliki (15%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Malik** (711–795 CE/ 93–179 AH) in Medina.

#### Hanbali (2%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal** (780–855 CE/ 164–241 AH) in Iraq.

## Shi'a (9.5% of the world's traditional Muslims)

The second-largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Shi'atu Ali* or 'the party of Ali,' the fourth caliph of Islam and first Imam in Shi'ism.

### Branches

#### Zaidis (Fivers) (Less than 1%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Zaid ibn 'Ali** (695–740 CE) in Medina.

#### Twelvers (8%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Ja'far al Sadiq** (702–765 CE/ 83–148 AH) in Medina.

#### Isma'ilis (Sevens) (Less than 0.5%)

Named after the followers of **Muhammad ibn Ismail** (746–809 CE/128–193 AH) in Medina.

### Schools of Islamic Law for Twelver Shi'a

#### Usuli

99% of Twelvers. This dominant school favors the use of *ijtihad*, independent legal reasoning, with an emphasis on four accepted collections of *Hadith*. Derive legal opinions from living *ayatollahs*, or *mujtahids*, whose rulings become obligatory. *Taqlid*, the practice of following rulings without questioning the religious authority, is a core tenet of this school. The name Usuli is derived from the Arabic term *usul* meaning 'principle'.

#### Akhbari

Akhbaris reject the use of *ijtihad* or reasoning, and do not follow *marjas* who practice *ijtihad*. They also prohibit exegesis of the Qur'an. Derive legal rulings from the Qur'an, *Hadith*, and consensus. The name Akhbari is derived from the Arabic term *akbbar* meaning 'traditions'. They can trace their roots to the followers of **Muhammad Amin Astarabadi** (d. 1627 CE). Akhbaris continue to exist to this day, although in small, concentrated pockets, particularly around Basra, Iraq.

## Ibadi (0.5% of the world's traditional Muslims)

The Ibadi school has origins in and is linked to the Kharijites, but the modern day community is distinct from the 7th century Islamic sect. It was founded after the death of Prophet Muhammad and is currently practiced by a majority of Oman's Muslim population. Also found across parts of Africa.

## Mystic Brotherhoods

Although reliable statistics are not available for the millions of Muslims who practice Islamic mysticism, it has been estimated that 25% of adult Sunni Muslims in 1900 CE participated in these brotherhoods as either *murids* (followers of the Sufi guide of a particular order) or *mutabarrikin* (supporters or affiliates of a particular Sufi order).

### Sunni Orders

#### Naqshbandiyya

Founded by **Baha al Din Naqshband** (d. 1389 CE) in Bukhara, modern day Uzbekistan. **Influence:** popular from China to North Africa, Europe and America.

#### Chishtiyya

Founded by the Persian saint **Mu'in al Din Chishti** (d. 1236 CE) Khurasan. **Influence:** highly influential in India.

#### Qadiriyya

Founded by scholar and saint **'Abd al Qadir al Jilani** (1077–1166 CE) in Baghdad, Iraq. **Influence:** stretches from Morocco to Malaysia, from Central Asia to South Africa.

#### Mawlawiyya

A Turkish order founded by the Persian saint and poet **Jalal al Din Rumi** (d. 1273 CE). **Influence:** mainly in Turkey.

#### Tijaniyya

**Ahmad al Tijani** (d. 1815 CE) who settled and taught in Fez, Morocco. **Influence:** major spiritual and religious role in Senegal, Nigeria, Mauritania and much of Sub-Saharan Africa.

#### Rifa'iyya

Founded by **Ahmad ibn 'Ali al Rifa'i** (d. 1182 CE) in southern Iraq. **Influence:** widely practiced across the Muslim world with a strong presence in Egypt.

#### Shadhiliyya

Founded by the Moroccan saint **Abu'l-Hassan al Shadili** (d. 1258 CE). **Influence:** most influential in North Africa and Egypt.

#### Yashrutiyya

Founded by **'Ali Nur al Din al Yashruti** (d. 1892 CE) in Palestine. **Influence:** strong presence in Syria and Lebanon.

#### Kubrawiyya

(d. 1221 CE) from Khawarzm, modern day Uzbekistan. **Influence:** mostly present across Central Asia.

#### Badawiyya

An Egyptian order founded by the Moroccan saint **Ahmad al Badawi** (d. 1276 CE), considered by many as the patron saint of Egypt. **Influence:** active role in Egypt and the Sudan.

#### Suhrawardiyya

Founded by Persian scholar **Abu Najib Suhrawardi** (d. 1168 CE) in Iraq. **Influence:** a strong presence in India.

#### Khalwatiyya

A Turkish order founded by the Persian saint **'Umar al Khalwati** (d. 1397 CE). **Influence:** wide presence in the Balkans, Syria, Lebanon and North Africa.

### Shi'a Orders

#### Irfan

*Irfan*, which means 'knowing' in Arabic and 'most beautiful and knowledgeable person' in Pashto, is Shi'a mysticism. **Mulla Sadr al Din Muhammad Shirazi** (1571–1636 CE) from Iran is considered a leading Shi'a theorist of *Irfan*.

## IIIb. Islamic Fundamentalism

### Sunni

#### Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood, or Al-Ikhwan Al-Muslimeen is a transnational Sunni movement, with no particular ideological adherence. It is the largest political opposition organization in many Arab states, particularly in Egypt where it was founded in opposition to colonial rule by Hassan al Banna in 1928. Al Banna originally sought to revive Muslim culture from its position of exploitation under colonial rule, through charitable and educational work, to bring Islam into a central role in people's life. Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966 CE) was also a leading member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 50s and 60s.

#### Wahhabism/Salafism

Wahhabism/Salafism are terms used interchangeably to refer to a particular brand of Islam. Salaf, meaning predecessors, refers to the very early practice of Islam by Muhammad and his immediate successors. Salafism seeks to revive the practice of Islam as it was at the time of Muhammad and can be critical of too much emphasis being placed on thinkers from after this period. Muhammad ibn 'Abd al Wahhab (1703–1792 CE) was an important figure in the resurrection of this ideology therefore Salafism is often simply known as Wahhabism.

### Shi'a

#### Revolutionary Shi'ism

Revolutionary Shi'ism is an ideology, based on the teachings of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989 CE), which shares many similarities with Marxist revolutionary thought. Khomeini believed that the only way to secure independence from colonial or imperial forces was through the creation of a Shi'a state, under the idea of Velayat-e Faqih (Guardianship of the Jurist). This means that all politics is subject to the opinion of the Supreme Leader who is responsible for the continued success of the revolution. It is only practiced in Iran.

## IIIc. Islamic Modernism

Islamic modernism is a reform movement started by politically-minded urbanites with scant knowledge of traditional Islam. These people had witnessed and studied Western technology and socio-political ideas, and realized that the Islamic world was being left behind technologically by the West and had become too weak to stand up to it. They blamed this weakness on what they saw as 'traditional Islam,' which they thought held them back and was not 'progressive' enough. They thus called for a complete overhaul of Islam, including—or rather in particular—Islamic law (*sharia*) and doctrine (*aqida*). Islamic modernism remains popularly an object of derision and ridicule, and is scorned by traditional Muslims and fundamentalists alike.



# The Amman Message

www.AmmanMessage.com

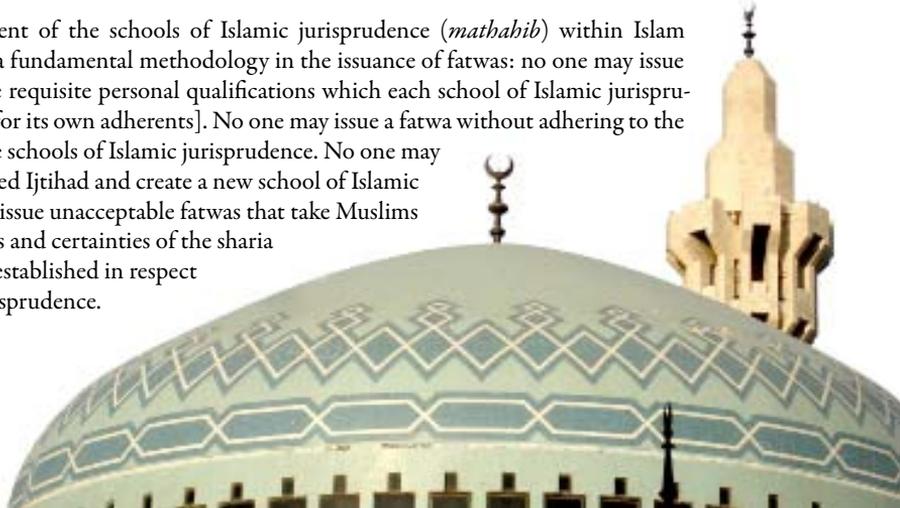
Orthodoxy in Islam is based on verse 2:285 of the Holy Qur'an, and has been best defined by the historical 2005 international Islamic consensus on the 'three points' of the Amman Message, these points being:

(a) Whosoever is an adherent to one of the four Sunni schools (*mathabib*) of Islamic jurisprudence (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali), the two Shi'a schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Ja'fari and Zaydi), the Ibadhi school of Islamic jurisprudence and the Thahiri school of Islamic jurisprudence, is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible and impermissible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour, and property are inviolable. Moreover, in accordance with the Sheikh Al-Azhar's fatwa, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to the Ash'ari creed or whoever practices real *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) an apostate. Likewise, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to true Salafi thought an apostate.

Equally, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in God, Glorified and Exalted be He, and His Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and acknowledges the five pillars of Islam, and does not deny any necessarily self-evident tenet of religion.

(b) There exists more in common between the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence than there is difference between them. The adherents to the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are in agreement as regards the basic principles of Islam. All believe in Allah (God), Glorified and Exalted be He, the One and the Unique; that the Noble Qur'an is the Revealed Word of God; and that our master Muhammad, may blessings and peace be upon him, is a Prophet and Messenger unto all mankind. All are in agreement about the five pillars of Islam: the two testaments of faith (*shahadatayn*); the ritual prayer (*salat*); almsgiving (*zakat*); fasting the month of Ramadan (*sawm*), and the Hajj to the sacred house of God (in Mecca). All are also in agreement about the foundations of belief: belief in Allah (God), His angels, His scriptures, His messengers, and in the Day of Judgment, in Divine Providence in good and in evil. Disagreements between the *ulema* (scholars) of the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are only with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (*furu'*) and not as regards the principles and fundamentals (*usul*) [of the religion of Islam]. Disagreement with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (*furu'*) is a mercy. Long ago it was said that variance in opinion among the *ulema* (scholars) 'is a good affair'.

(c) Acknowledgement of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*mathabib*) within Islam means adhering to a fundamental methodology in the issuance of fatwas: no one may issue a fatwa without the requisite personal qualifications which each school of Islamic jurisprudence determines [for its own adherents]. No one may issue a fatwa without adhering to the methodology of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. No one may claim to do unlimited Ijtihad and create a new school of Islamic jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable fatwas that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the sharia and what has been established in respect of its schools of jurisprudence.



❧ The Top ❧

50

# The Top 50

1. His Majesty King Abdullah bin 'Abd Al 'Aziz Al-Saud  
King of Saudi Arabia,  
Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
2. His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
3. His Majesty Amir al-Mu'minin King Mohammed VI  
King of Morocco
4. Dr. Mohammed Badie  
Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood
5. His Highness Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani  
Emir of Qatar
6. His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei  
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
7. His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein  
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
8. His Eminence Professor Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb  
Grand Sheikh of the Al-Azhar University,  
Grand Imam of the Al-Azhar Mosque
9. His Excellency President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono  
President of Indonesia
10. Hodjaefendi Fethullah Gülen  
Turkish Muslim Preacher
11. H.E. Muhammad Morsi Isa Al-Ayyat  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
12. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Aal Sa'id  
Sultan of Oman
13. His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani  
Marja of the Hawza, Najaf, Iraq
14. His Eminence Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a  
Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt
15. His Highness General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan  
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces
16. Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi  
Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars
17. Hajji Mohammed Abd Al-Wahhab  
Amir of Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan
18. His Eminence Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh  
Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
19. Dr. K.H. Said Aqil Siradj  
Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama
20. Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda  
Saudi Scholar and Educator
21. Her Eminence Sheikha Munira Qubeysi  
Leader of the Qubeysi Movement
22. His Royal Eminence Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III  
Sultan of Sokoto
23. His Eminence Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse  
Leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi Order
24. His Excellency President Abdullah Gül  
President of the Republic of Turkey

25. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah  
Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam
26. Mufti Akhtar Raza Khan Qadiri Al-Azhari  
Barelwi Leader and Spiritual Guide
27. Sheikh Dr M Sa'id Ramadan Al-Bouti  
Leading Islamic Scholar in Syria
28. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah  
Secretary General of Hezbollah
29. His Eminence Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah  
Deputy-Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars
30. His Eminence Mohammad bin Mohammad Al-Mansour  
Imam of the Zaidi Sect of Shi'a Muslims
31. His Royal Highness Shah Karim Al-Hussayni  
The Aga Khan IV, 49th Imam of Ismaili Muslims
32. His Eminence Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani  
Leading Scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence
33. Sheikh Mohammad Ali Al-Sabouni  
Scholar of Tafsir
34. Dr Amr Khaled  
Preacher and Social Activist
35. H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas  
President of the Palestinian National Authority
36. Habib Umar bin Hafiz  
Director of Dar Al Mustafa, Tarim, Yemen
37. Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah  
Queen of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
38. Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned  
Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation
39. Professor Dr M Din Syamsuddin  
Chairman of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia
40. Maulana Mahmood Madani  
Leader and Executive Member of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, India
41. Habib Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri  
Director General of the Tabah Foundation, UAE
42. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson  
Founder of Zaytuna Institute, USA
43. His Excellency Professor Dr Ekmelledin Ihsanoglu  
Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference
44. Professor Dr Seyyed Hossein Nasr  
Islamic Philosopher
45. Sheikh Mehmet Nazim Adil Al-Qubrusi Al-Haqqani  
Leader of Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order
46. His Eminence Sheikh Professor Dr Mustafa Ceric  
Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina
47. His Excellency Dr Abd Al-Aziz bin 'Uthman Altwajjiri  
Secretary General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
48. Khaled Mashaal  
Leader of Hamas
49. Dr Aref Ali Nayed  
Scholar
50. Prof. Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad)  
Scholar

**Country:** Saudi Arabia  
**Born:** 1 Aug 1923 (age 89)  
**Source of Influence:** Political  
**Influence:** King with authority over 26 million residents of Saudi Arabia and approximately 14 million pilgrims annually  
**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi  
**2009 Rank:** 1  
**2010 Rank:** 1  
**2011 Rank:** 1  
**2012 Rank:** 1



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“We state with a unified voice that religions through which Almighty God sought to bring happiness to mankind should not be turned into instruments to cause misery.”

*King Abdullah*

**\$500<sup>MIL</sup>**

In 2008, Saudi Arabia gave \$500 million in cash to the World Food Programme — the largest contribution in the WFP’s history.

**\$1.247<sup>BIL</sup>**

Amount of Humanitarian aid between 2006 to 2012.



*His Majesty King*  
**Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud**

# H.M. King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

## King of Saudi Arabia & Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud is the sixth king of Saudi Arabia. His influence comes from being the absolute monarch of the most powerful Arab nation and is manifested by the role Saudi Arabia plays in three critical areas: 1) having the two holy cities of Mecca and Madina, which millions of Muslims visit throughout the year; 2) exporting crude oil and refined petroleum products which ensures its central international role, and 3) propagating Islam through its huge da'wa network which makes its influence felt in all Muslim countries.

**Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques:** The king has significant influence in the global Muslim community through his custodianship of the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Mecca is the main pilgrimage site for 1.5 billion Muslims. Each year approximately 4 million pilgrims perform the Hajj. In addition to this, approximately 10 million pilgrims (including Saudi residents and GCC citizens) perform the *umrah*, 'the lesser Hajj', throughout the year.

**Controller of World's Largest Oil Reserves:** He reigns over a land of massive crude oil reserves—Saudi Arabia has approximately 20 percent of the world's proven oil reserves—making him a key player in the global petroleum industry.

**Head of the World's Largest Da'wa Network:** King Abdullah is also head of the most extensive da'wa network of missionary Muslims in the world, promoting the Salafi brand of Islam. Salafism is historically rooted in Saudi Arabia, and owes its global spread to the financial backing of Saudi Arabia.

**Reformer & Philanthropist:** The king has proven his domestic influence in Saudi Arabia by continuing landmark reforms to fight fundamentalism, corruption, balance the Saudi budget, tailor the education system, address women's and minority rights, engage in interreligious diplomacy as well as tackle problems in the justice system. He has:

- Given scholarships to over 130,000 Saudi students who are currently studying overseas [30% are female]
- Established the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Vienna, Austria
- Granted women the right to vote in the 2015 municipal elections
- Spent over \$60 billion in benefits to Saudi citizens—including housing and jobs, while introducing a minimum wage of \$800 per month
- Opened the largest women-only university in the world, with a capacity of 12,000 students
- Presented a \$10 billion endowment to the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology
- Convened a global interfaith summit in 2008 and subsequently issued the Madrid Declaration, which calls for tolerance between religions and a culture of peace
- Been the first Saudi monarch in 51 years to address the UN General Assembly and the first reigning Saudi monarch to have met with a pope, Pope Benedict XVI in November 2007
- Donated hundreds of millions in cash and relief materials for many devastated areas worldwide and pledged a \$1 billion donation towards the reconstruction of the Palestinian coastal territory during the Israeli war on Gaza.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Saudi monarchy is using the Arab Spring to spread its Salafi influence across the Arab world (e.g. Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Libya).
- Although there have been small demonstrations in Saudi Arabia, they have been rejected by the Salafi majority and by the perception that the King is already reforming at a pace compatible with Saudi society.
- Hosted Ben Ali, called for revolt against Gaddafi and Assad.
- Supports the Kingdom of Bahrain, and is actively supporting the Free Syrian Army.

**Country:** Turkey  
**Born:** 26 Feb 1954 (age 58)  
**Source of Influence:** Political  
**Influence:** Leads government of 75.7 million Turkish citizens  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni  
**2009 Rank:** 3  
**2010 Rank:** 2  
**2011 Rank:** 3  
**2012 Rank:** 2

“What should be targeted is a concept of organic, and not just mechanic, democracy that preserves the rule of law, separation of powers, and that is participatory and pluralistic”

*H.E. Recep Erdogan*

49.8%

Percentage of the vote won by his party in the 2011 elections.

5.7%

Turkey's inflation rates – the lowest in 39 years. Erdogan inherited an economy with a 34.9% inflation rate when he first came into office.



© Darko Vojinovic / AP

2

*His Excellency*  
Recep Tayyip Erdogan

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/2](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/2)

# H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan

## Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

Recep Tayyip Erdogan is the most successful Prime Minister in Turkey's multiparty era. His party, the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, the Justice and Development Party), won its third consecutive election in June 2011. During his term, Turkey has seen unprecedented economic growth, constitutional reform, and a re-emergence as a major global power. This success in addition to his personal charisma and hard-work have made Turkey a model to emulate for many Muslim countries. Under his watch Turkey has become the 16th largest economy in the world and a member of the G20.

**A Popular Reformist:** In September 2010, over 58% of voters supported Erdogan's constitutional referendum which made changes to the constitution in order to bring the constitution into compliance with European Union Standards hence facilitating Turkey's EU membership process. Erdogan is also leading groundbreaking initiatives by introducing a number of democratic measures in regards to the country's judicial system, the Kurdish issue, non-Muslim minorities, Alawites, freedom of the press, free political association, zero tolerance to torture, and the fight against coup attempts.

**A Mediator:** Erdogan insists on a role for Turkey as a mediator and bridge between cultures and civilizations. The Alliance of Civilizations initiative of the United Nations—that Erdogan established with the Spanish president, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero—has become a key forum for international, intercultural, and interreligious dialogue and cooperation. It has continued to develop deeper relations with key players in the Arab world, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

**Arab World:** Turkey's position during the various uprisings in the Arab Spring has always been to side with the people. Erdogan and other high-level officials have visited Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya post-

revolution to show their continuing support for the transition to democracy. Erdogan is hailed for his strong opposition toward the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip, and his criticism of Israel's 2010 raid on a humanitarian flotilla to Gaza, which killed nine Turkish nationals. With Israel refusing to apologise, relations deteriorated to the point where ambassadors have been recalled, and military cooperation frozen.

**Global Relations:** Under Erdogan, Turkish foreign relations have taken on a global perspective. Starting with the adoption of a 'good neighbor policy'—in August 2009, Turkey has focused on building stronger relations with all of its seven land-contiguous neighbors (especially Greece) and also all of those countries bordering the Black Sea (an important trading hub and a geopolitically significant area). In Africa, it has opened up over twenty new embassies and consulates and when Somalia suffered from a crippling famine and drought in 2011, Erdogan not only gave aid, but also became the first leader from outside Africa to visit Somalia in nearly two decades. While Turkey has about 45 % of its foreign trade with European countries, it is developing strong trade relations with other regions and attracting investment from all over the world.



Erdogan rose to fame as a reformist mayor of Istanbul by combining religious values, sharp business acumen, and strong leadership in leading Istanbul to an economic boom.

## The Arab Summer?

- He supports the Free Syrian Army and has hosted their leaders and trained their fighters.
- His persistent wrangling with Israel keeps him popular in the Arab World.
- Turkey remains an admirable model for a confluence of Islam and democracy.

**Country:** Morocco  
**Born:** 21 Aug 1963 (Age 49)  
**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative, Development  
**Influence:** King with authority over 32 million Moroccans  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Maliki  
**2009 Rank:** 3  
**2010 Rank:** 5  
**2011 Rank:** 2  
**2012 Rank:** 3

“To rise to current and future challenges, we need to have full confidence in ourselves and to believe firmly that, notwithstanding the difficulties and the constraints, our future lies in our hands.”

*King Mohammed VI*

14<sup>KM</sup>

The length of the Strait of Gibraltar and thus the distance separating Morocco from Europe.

30%

Percentage of Morocco's population that consist of people aged from 15-30.



3

*His Majesty Amir al-Mu'minin*  
**King Mohammed VI**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/3](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/3)

# H.M. Amir al-Mu'minin King Mohammed VI

## King of Morocco

King Mohammed VI is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his family has ruled Morocco for close to 400 years. He is also constitutionally the Amir al-Mu'minin, or Commander of the Faithful, thereby combining religious and political authority. King Mohammed VI is lauded for his domestic reform policies and pioneering efforts in modernizing Morocco and countering terrorism. He tackles issues of poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion at home, and has improved foreign relations. King Mohammed VI is an influential leader due to his control of the network of Muslims following the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence, and as a leading monarch in Africa.

**Contender for the Caliphate:** The 400-year-old Alaoutie dynasty traces its lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It sees itself as a continuation of the Andalusian Golden Age of Islam, which was characterised by peaceful co-existence and intellectual and cultural exchange and development.

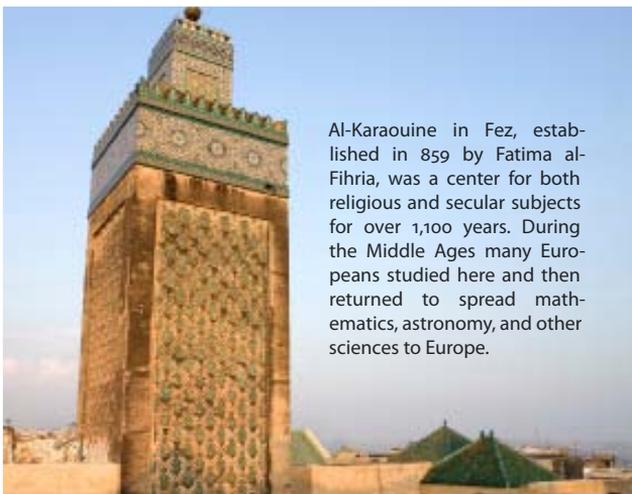
**Control of Maliki Network:** Morocco is home to the oldest university in the world, Al-Karaouine. This university is the center of the Maliki school of jurisprudence. Since early in his reign, King Mohammed VI has implemented the Mudawana family law code that gives rights to women in divorce and property ownership, as well as citizenship to children born from non-Moroccan fathers. He has also commissioned the Islamic Affairs Ministry to train women preachers, or Morchidat, who are now active chaplains to Moroccans across the globe.

**Huge Influence over Muslims in Africa:** King Mohammed VI leads the largest African monarchy, with a population of 32 million. Besides political links, Morocco maintains strong spiritual ties with Muslims all over Africa. Morocco is the site of the tomb of a highly revered Sufi sheikh, Mawlana Ahmed Ibn Mohammed Tijani Al Hassani Al Maghribi (1735- 1815 CE), the founder of the Tijani-

yia Sufi order, whose shrine attracts millions from across the continent. Morocco is also recognized as a source for the spread of Islam through West Africa. Thus, King Mohammed VI exercises vast amounts of power and influence over Muslims in Morocco, throughout Africa, and the rest of the world. He leads one of the most stable constitutional monarchies in the region, which is also the center of a moderate, flourishing Muslim culture.

**Support for Al-Quds:** The King and indeed all Moroccans show strong support for Palestinians and for Jerusalem. The Moroccan link with Jerusalem has been strong since Salah al-Din's son endowed the Magharbeh Quarter, next to the Buraq Wall, to North African pilgrims in 1193. This 800 year old quarter was demolished by the Israeli authorities in 1967 after they had captured East Jerusalem.

**Reform:** King Mohammed VI has implemented major reforms in response to the Arab Spring protests. These have included a new constitution which has transferred many powers to a freely and fairly elected government. The Justice and Development Party (PJD) won the elections and is the current government.



Al-Karaouine in Fez, established in 859 by Fatima al-Fihria, was a center for both religious and secular subjects for over 1,100 years. During the Middle Ages many Europeans studied here and then returned to spread mathematics, astronomy, and other sciences to Europe.

## The Arab Summer?

- Responding to demonstrations in the country, King Mohammed VI has changed the country's constitution and the prime minister and the parliament now have powers that were previously the reserve of the King.
- He is the big winner of reform and evolution — not revolution — in the Arab Spring; no one was killed in Morocco. The post-Arab Spring formula in Morocco has proven to work successfully with an elected government and the king essentially keeping moral authority.

**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 7 Aug 1943 (Age 69)

**Source of Influence:** Administrative, Political, International Islamic Networks

**Influence:** Leader of a transnational movement in the Middle East, Africa, the UK, and US

**School of Thought:** Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

**2009 Rank:** Unlisted

**2010 Rank:** 10

**2011 Rank:** 8

**2012 Rank:** 4



“We will not welcome any Israeli representatives before Israel does its duties toward the Palestinians. We do not have to meet with anyone”

*Dr Mohammed Badie*

12<sup>YRS</sup>

The number of years he has spent in Egypt's prisons: 9 years starting in 1965 and a 3-year sentence starting in 1999.

6

Number of positions he has held in the Muslim brotherhood at various times before attaining the highest position of the Supreme Guide.

4

*Supreme Guide*

**Dr Mohammed Badie**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/4](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/4)

# Dr Mohammed Badie

## Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood

Dr Mohammed Badie succeeded Mohammad Mahdi Akef as the 8th Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood in January 2010. Badie is a professor of veterinary pathology at Beni-Suef University in southern Egypt, but has been elected to his position due to his work with various administrative offices, Education Association, and subsequently, the International Guidance Bureau of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is the largest Islamic political party in Egypt.

**Leader of an Expansive Muslim Network:** Dr Badie heads the oldest and largest Muslim social, political as well as religious organization in existence. The Muslim Brotherhood forms the leading opposition party in many Muslim countries and has branches in most of the Muslim world, besides its base in Egypt. Members of the organization can be found in Bahrain, Syria, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Algeria, Sudan, Somalia, Tunisia, and Libya, as well as the United States. In light of its expanse, Dr Badie is a strong advocate of internal unity within the Brotherhood as well as globally, between all Muslims.

**Model of Conservatism:** Dr Badie represents a conservative shift in the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood. Due to his background in education and religious conservatism, analysts predict that he will emphasize the Brotherhood's social work. Though he has been imprisoned in the past on multiple occasions due to political activities, Dr Badie stressed in his inaugural address the need for gradual reform based on dialogue and non-violence.

**Post Mubarak-Era:** Hosni Mubarak was forced to resign as President of Egypt on February 11, 2011 after having held power since 1981. The elections that the Egyptian Revolution wanted finally began in November 2011. They lasted for 6 weeks, in 3 phases, to vote for 498 members of the People's Assembly. The Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party –won 235 seats (47.2%).

However, in June 2012, the Supreme Constitutional Court ruled the elections void leaving the country with no parliament and concentrating power even more firmly in the hands of the generals who took over from Mubarak. That decision was itself overturned when the Presidential post was won by Muhammad Morsi (the Brotherhood's candidate) in June 2012, who then managed to curtail the power of the military.

### *Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guides*

1. 1928–1949: Hassan al Banna\* (21 years)
2. 1949–1972: Hassan al-Hudaybi (23 years)
3. 1972–1986: Umar al-Tilmisani (14 years)
4. 1986–1996: Muhammad Hamid Abu al-Nasr (10 years)
5. 1996–2002: Mustafa Mashhur (6 years)
6. 2002–2004: Ma'mun al-Hudaybi (2 years)
7. 2004–2010: Mohammed Mahdi Akef (6 years)
8. 2010–pres.: Mohammed Badie (2 years)

\* founder

### The Arab Summer?

- The Muslim Brotherhood is the biggest winner of Egypt's revolt. They now face the challenge of being a ruling party, not just an opposition, and all eyes are on how they deal with the economy, Israel, pluralism, and the protection of minorities.

**Country:** Qatar

**Born:** 1 Jan 1952 (Age 60)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative, Lineage, Philanthropy

**Influence:** Political leader of over 1.5 million residents of oil-rich Qatar

**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

**2010 Rank:** 21

**2011 Rank:** 6

**2012 Rank:** 5



“Approving a permanent constitution sets the basis for a civic society and people sharing in decision-making that guarantees public rights and freedoms”

*Emir Hamad Al Thani*

**\$137<sup>MIL</sup>**

The initial grant made by Emir Al-Thani to establish Al-Jazeera, funding it by an emiri decree, with several year-by-year loans to keep it going.

**\$75<sup>BIL</sup>**

The record amount of investments the Emir has pledged to spend for the 2022 World Cup for infrastructure, facilities, tourism, communications and transport.

© Richard Drew / AP

5

*His Highness Emir Sheikh*  
**Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/5](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/5)

# H.H. Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani

## Emir of Qatar

Acceding to power in 1995, His Highness Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani is the 9th emir (also *amir*, leader) of the State of Qatar. The monarchy of Qatar is increasingly powerful as an economic force, a mediator of peace, and a thriving emirate on the north-eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Sheikh Hamad's leadership is marked by successful reform. He has made significant efforts to modernize the military as Commander in Chief of the Qatari Armed Forces. Sheikh Hamad has also developed strong international relations—Qatar hosted, and is now chair, of the Arab Summit.

**Global Stage:** Qatar has become a player on the global stage. Politically, it was at the forefront of the response to the Libyan Conflict and is playing a major role in other Arab Spring uprisings. On the media front, it funds the hugely influential satellite television network Al Jazeera. In the sports world, it has gained worldwide recognition by winning the bid to host the 2022 soccer World Cup. Another major boost is the Qatar Foundation's sponsorship of the world's most successful football team, Barcelona.

**Economic Catalyst:** According to Global Finance, Qatar is the richest country in the world with a GDP per capita of \$90,149. It is the top exporter of liquefied natural gas, and the site of the third largest natural gas reserves in the world. During Sheikh Hamad's reign, the country has developed one of the fastest growing economies in the Middle East. Recently, Sheikh Hamad signed a \$500 million investment deal with Turkey for agriculture, food, and stock-breeding development. He has also invested billions toward infrastructure, real estate and educational initiatives for Qatar.

**Humanitarian:** Sheikh Hamad has been recognized in Forbes Magazine's list of the wealthiest royals in the world with a net worth of \$2 billion. What makes him markedly influential, however, is his strategic charitable giving. In February, 2010 Qatar successfully sponsored a peace deal between the rebel Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudanese government—pledging \$1 billion to reconstruction efforts in Darfur which involve establishing a development bank in Sudan.

**Patron of the Arts:** Sheikh Hamad is noted for his love of the arts. In 2008, he inaugurated the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, boasting exclusive collections of Islamic artifacts from across the globe collected over a period of 20 years. Acclaimed architect I.M. Pei was commissioned to design the award-winning landmark structure on an island off Doha Bay over a period of 20 years.



The booming skyline of Doha, Qatar. Qatar has an 11.3% urban growth rate, the highest rate in the Muslim World.

## The Arab Summer?

- He is driving much of the Arab Spring through the coverage given by Al-Jazeera, the financial support given to protestors and political support to anti-government parties (such as in Libya and Syria). He is arguably the biggest enabler of the Arab Spring.

**Country:** Iran

**Born:** 17 July 1939 (Age 73)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative

**Influence:** Supreme Leader of 75 million Iranians

**School of Thought:** Traditional Twelver Shi'a, Revolutionary Shi'ism

**2009 Rank:** 2

**2010 Rank:** 3

**2011 Rank:** 5

**2012 Rank:** 6

“Mass killings of human beings are catastrophic acts which are condemned wherever they may happen and whoever the perpetrators and the victims may be.”

*Ayatollah Khamenei*

23

The number of years Khamenei has ruled over Iran as the Supreme Leader, being only the second leader in the 32 years since the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

95%

The percentage of votes he received in the 1981 presidential elections when he became the first cleric to serve in the office.



© Caren Firouz / Reuters

6

*His Excellency, Grand Ayatollah*  
**Sayyid Ali Khamenei**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/6](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/6)

# H.E. Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei

## Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Grand Ayatollah Khamenei is the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He was born in Mashhad, and studied in the leading Iranian religious seminary in Qom, before becoming involved in the struggle with the Pahlavi Regime in the sixties and seventies. He was a key figure in the revolution in 1979 and served as President between 1981–1989 before succeeding Ayatollah Khomeini as Supreme Leader upon the latter's death. He has vocally supported most of the unrest in the Arab World, likening it to the Iranian Revolution.

**Champion of Iranian Solidarity:** Although Khamenei was initially criticized for endorsing the June 2009 re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, he has been acclaimed for his response to the post-election turmoil. He ordered the closing of the Kahrizak detention centre in response to reports of prisoner abuse and death. Most recently, he has called for solidarity within Iran, in light of the 31st anniversary of the Islamic Republic on February 11, 2010. He is a strong advocate of Iran's nuclear energy program, but has described possessing nuclear weapons as a 'sin'.

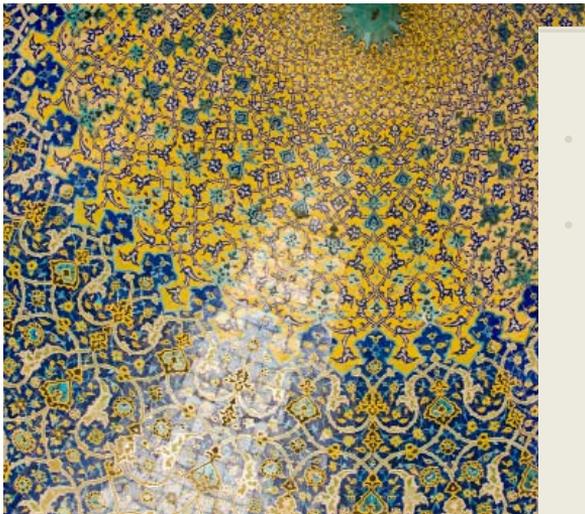
**Supreme Leader, Velayat-e Faqih:** Khamenei's current influence stems from his powerful position as a religious leader, which gives him a unique role in political affairs. His job is to enact the Velayat-e Faqih—the guardianship of the jurist. In real terms this means a system where scholars of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) have a controlling say in the political affairs of the state. The rule of the jurist was a concept created by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, based on ideas that have run through Iranian political history since the time of Shah Ismail—who was the first to make Shi'a Islam the national religion of Iran. It was conceived in a battle against oppression as a way of

safeguarding the Iranian nation from tyranny; giving the final say in all matters to a group of religious scholars, the Council of Guardians. This Council is headed by a chief arbitrator—the Supreme Leader.

**Leader of Shi'a Revolution:** Khamenei gains much of his influence in Iran from his role as a leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran was forged out of the 1979 Revolution. Combating what many saw as the tyrannical rule of the Shah, Khamenei joined the Society of Combatant Clergy that staged demonstrations mobilizing many of the protests leading to the Shah's overthrow. After the revolution in 1979, Khamenei was one of the founding members of the Islamic Republic Party, and a member of the assembly of experts that was responsible for drafting Iran's new constitution.

**Sunni-Shia Reconciliation:** On September 2, 2010 Khamenei issued a historic fatwa banning the insult of any symbol that Sunnis hold to be dear, including but not limited to the companions and wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). This fatwa was received with great appreciation by the Chancellor of Al-Azhar University, Shaykh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb.

Light shines through a dome in Isfahan, Iran



## The Arab Summer?

- He has referred to the Arab Spring as the 'Islamic Awakening' and warned the protestors not to let their movements be hijacked by outside forces.
- He has been particularly supportive of the Bahraini protestors, but has sided with the government in the Syrian protests. This double standard has lost him credibility in the Sunni Arab World, yet he retains influence with the Arab Shi'a in Iraq. Moreover, he has forcefully suppressed protests in his own country.

**Country:** Jordan

**Born:** 30 Jan 1962 (Age 50)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Lineage

**Influence:** King with authority over approximately 6.4 million Jordanians and outreach to Traditional Islam

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 4

2010 Rank: 4

2011 Rank: 4

2012 Rank: 7



“Blowing up buses will not induce the Israelis to move forward, and neither will the killing of Palestinians or the demolition of their homes and their future. All this needs to stop. And we pledge that Jordan will do its utmost to help achieve it.”

*King Abdullah II*

100<sup>MW</sup>

Energy that will be produced at the solar energy site in Ma'an, reducing Jordan's CO2 emissions by as much as 160,000 tonnes a year.

70%

The decrease in public debt ratio during his reign. He pushed external debt as a percentage of GDP down from 189% in 1990 to 25.8% in 2008.

7

*His Majesty*

King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/7](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/7)

# H.M. King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein

## King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

King Abdullah II of Jordan has influence in Jordan and around the world due to his lineage in the Hashemite family, his custodianship of the Islamic and Christian holy sites of Jerusalem and activism on various fronts—from freedom of the press and reformed domestic policy to international diplomacy. He is noted for having developed Jordan’s free market economy, arts and culture scene, as well as addressing issues of homelessness and poverty. He has initiated domestic political reform aiming to establish a parliamentary government.

**Prophetic Lineage:** King Abdullah II is a member of the Hashemite family and the 42nd generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through the line of the Prophet’s grandson Al-Hasan. The Hashemites, or Bani Hashem, link back to the tribe of Quraish; Hashem was the name of the Prophet’s great-grandfather. King Abdullah II is thus a member of the Aal al Bayt (the family of the Prophet Muhammad).

**Ruling Dynasty:** The Hashemite family ruled Mecca from 1201 CE to 1925 CE and other branches of the family have ruled Mecca from 500 CE, when Qusayy, the grandfather of Hashem, became Mecca’s first king. The Hashemite dynasty is the oldest ruling dynasty in the Islamic world, and the second-oldest in the world, after that of Japan.

**Custodian of Holy Sites in Jerusalem:** As custodian of the Muslim holy sites in the city of Jerusalem, King Abdullah II maintains a unique prestige in the region. He has gone on record in March 2010 to condemn Israel’s inclusion of West Bank religious sites in its national heritage list.

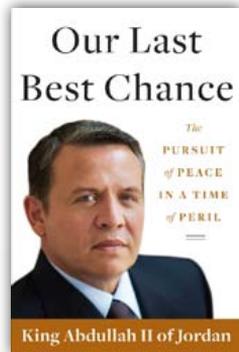
**Islamic Outreach:** King Abdullah II has proven influence at the forefront of a global intrafaith movement, through the creation of the Amman Message; a call for greater intra-religious tolerance and unity in Islam that was endorsed by representatives from all major Muslim groups in 2004. King Abdullah II is credited with the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought’s most authoritative website on the Qur’an and tafsir or Qur’anic exegesis (see p. 159 and [www.altafsir.com](http://www.altafsir.com)). King Abdullah II is also noted for founding the new World Islamic Sciences and Education University in Jordan ([www.wise.edu.jo](http://www.wise.edu.jo)). In 2012 he launched the Integral Chairs initiative (see p. 179).

**Peace Activist:** King Abdullah II is the leading player in the dialogue for peace in Israel-Palestine. He has constantly and openly called for discussion in the negotiations toward a two-state solution.

He is also lauded as an interfaith leader for his support of the 2007 initiative, A Common Word—a groundbreaking initiative in Christian-Muslim engagement ([www.ACommonWord.com](http://www.ACommonWord.com)). He was also the initiator and driving force behind the recently adopted UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution, marking the first week of February an annual celebration of faiths.

RIGHT: King Abdullah’s recently published book on the Middle East peace process.

BELOW: Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, the holiest site for Muslims in the Levant.



## The Arab Summer?

- Taking the lead in Jordan, the King opened a national dialogue, changed the constitution and changed the government and the intelligence chief. The King also disarmed his own police to avoid violence and has promised parliamentary democracy by January 2013.
- Nevertheless the King has been under pressure because of the difficult economic situation
- H.M. King Abdullah has said the Arab Spring ‘can be an opportunity to institutionalize positive change that is necessary for a strong, secure, prosperous future.’



**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 1946 (Age 66)

**Source of Influence:** Administrative

**Influence:** Highest scholarly authority for a majority of Sunni Muslims, runs the foremost and largest Sunni Islamic university

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 25

2010 Rank: 7

2011 Rank: 7

2012 Rank: 8



“The unity between the Muslims and Coptic Christians of Egypt is something of absolute importance.”

*Sheikh Al-Tayyeb*

1,036<sup>YRS</sup>

Number of continuous years Al-Azhar has been teaching, making it the oldest continuously operating university in the world and second oldest in the world, overall.

7<sup>MIL</sup>

The number of pages being digitized for online retrieval from Al-Azhar's massive collection of manuscripts.

© Amr Sharaf / AP



*His Eminence Professor Dr Sheikh  
Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb*

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/8](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/8)

# H.E. Prof. Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb

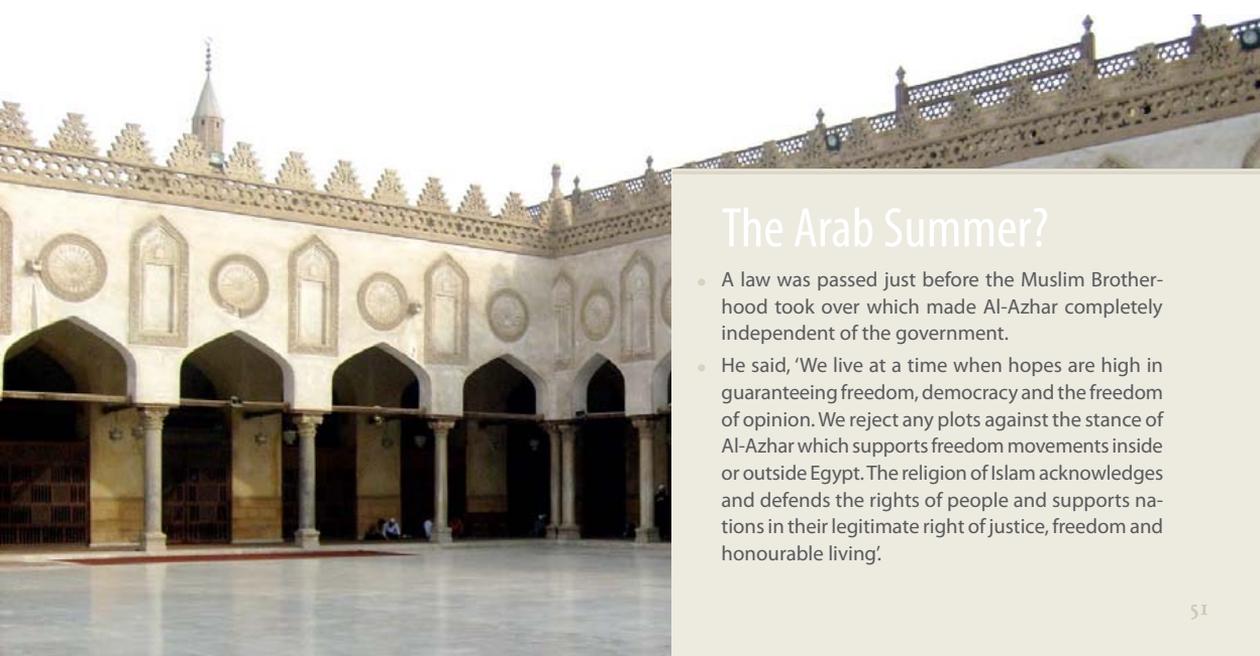
## Grand Sheikh of the Al-Azhar University, Grand Imam of the Al-Azhar Mosque

Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb was appointed as Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar in March 2010, after the passing of his predecessor, Dr Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi. Al-Tayyeb was formerly the president of the Al-Azhar for seven years and prior to that, served for two years as the most powerful cleric in Egypt as its Grand Mufti. His scholarly influence as a leading intellectual of Sunni Islam spans the globe. He has served as the dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Aswan, and the theology faculty of the International Islamic University in Pakistan. He has also taught in universities in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

**Advocate of Traditional Islam:** Al-Tayyeb has emphasised his mission to promote traditional Islam since becoming Grand Sheikh. He has stressed the importance of teaching students about Islamic heritage - considering Al-Azhar graduates as ambassadors of Islam to the world.

**Spiritual Leader of the Al-Azhar University:** Sheikh Al-Tayyeb leads the second-oldest university in the world, where teaching has continued without interruption since 975 CE. Al-Azhar represents the center of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. It is a key institution that issues authoritative religious rulings and has provided extensive Islamic education to Egyptian and international students since its inception over a millennium ago. This history makes it a bastion of Sunni traditionalism. The university is considered one of the most prominent Islamic educational institutions, and the foremost center of Sunni Muslim scholarship worldwide.

**Administers the Al-Azhar Education Network:** Al-Azhar is the second oldest, and currently the largest university in the world, having risen from a group of three schools in the 1950s to its current state with 72 feeder schools, and close to 300,000 students studying there at any one time. Including schools that are part of Al-Azhar waqf initiatives, there are close to 2 million students. This immense size and grounded respect make the head of Al-Azhar an extraordinarily powerful and academically influential person. In spite of his huge workload as president, and now as Grand Sheikh, Al-Tayyeb publishes regularly in numerous academic journals, dealing particularly with the reception of Islamic culture and philosophy in the Western world. Al-Tayyeb is also a member of the Egyptian Society of Philosophy, the Supreme Court of Islamic Affairs and is the head of the Religious Committee at the Egyptian Radio and Television Union.



## The Arab Summer?

- A law was passed just before the Muslim Brotherhood took over which made Al-Azhar completely independent of the government.
- He said, 'We live at a time when hopes are high in guaranteeing freedom, democracy and the freedom of opinion. We reject any plots against the stance of Al-Azhar which supports freedom movements inside or outside Egypt. The religion of Islam acknowledges and defends the rights of people and supports nations in their legitimate right of justice, freedom and honourable living.'

**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 9 Sept 1949 (Age 63)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Development

**Influence:** Leader of 233.5 million citizens and residents of Indonesia

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2009 Rank:** Top 500

**2010 Rank:** 10

**2011 Rank:** 11

**2012 Rank:** 9

“God willing, in the next five years, the world will say, ‘Indonesia is something, Indonesia is rising.’ “

*President Yudhoyono*

17,508

The number of Islands that make up Indonesia, the largest archipelago in the world, which are split between 33 provinces.

735

The number of languages spoken in Indonesia—the second-largest multilingual population in the world—38 of which have over 100,000 native speakers.



© Achmad Ibrahim / AP

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*His Excellency President*  
**Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/9](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/9)

# H.E. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

## President of Indonesia

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is the political leader of the most populous Muslim country in the world. Commonly referred to as SBY, he has had marked influence over the country as the first directly elected president of Indonesia and over the world as a champion of anti-terrorism efforts and a beacon of democracy in the Muslim World. He has been praised both at home and abroad for instituting processes to tackle the widespread corruption in Indonesian public life and in reinforcing the mandate of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK).

**Beacon of Democracy:** President Yudhoyono came to power after a successful career with the Indonesian National Army as a four-star general—when he was dubbed “the thinking general” for his efforts toward military reform. This reputation, and a pristine political career with the administrations of former Presidents Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri are the basis upon which the Democratic Party was founded in 2001.

This new political party was founded on the *pancasila* or five basic principles (belief in the Oneness of God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy, and social justice) with the goal of launching Yudhoyono’s candidacy for the 2004 elections. Since then, he has become increasingly influential as a beacon of democracy in a country historically marred by corruption and political instability. He was re-elected for a second and final five-year term in October 2009.

**Popular Reformist:** Besides proposing military reform, President Yudhoyono has been recognized for his efforts to establish regional autonomy laws and resolve the separatist conflict in the Aceh and Papua provinces. He has also been credited for reviving the economy, and for his market-friendly approach to reform. He works closely with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) to clean up graft and corruption in Indonesia. The resulting economic and political stability has been attributed to his unique influence and the power of his personal leadership in the country.

**Anti-Terrorism Advocate:** Yudhoyono’s increasing popularity is due in part to the sincerity with which he actualizes his promises to the Indonesian people such as the promises for anti-terrorism enforcement made during his 2004 election campaign. Indonesia has worked closely with Australian intelligence and security forces to quell extremist threats. In March, 2010, he was awarded the Honorary Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) by former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd who said the award was in recognition of the Indonesian leader’s efforts in tracking down the Bali bombers behind the October, 2002 attack.

In response to the July 2009 hotel bombings in Jakarta, President Yudhoyono has been vigilant about openly condemning the perpetrators as agents of terrorism and simultaneously voiced his dedication to establishing peace and security in Indonesia through programs that target education and poverty-alleviation in key areas where militants may prey on the youth.

**Pop Singer:** In January 2010, he released a third album of romantic pop songs titled ‘I’m Certain I’ll Make It’. In a message on the album cover, President Yudhoyono said that he liked to use his free time in between his “struggle to serve the country” to “express [his] feelings in the form of arts”.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of President Yudhoyono.

Terrace rice fields in Bali, Indonesia. Indonesia is the third largest producer of rice after China and India.



**Country:** Turkey

**Born:** 27 Apr 1941 (Age 71)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly

**Influence:** Figure of spiritual and social leadership for millions of Turkish Muslims and others around the world

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2009 Rank:** 13

**2010 Rank:** 13

**2011 Rank:** 15

**2012 Rank:** 10

“One should seek Islam through its own sources and in its own representatives throughout history; not through the actions of a tiny minority that misrepresent it”

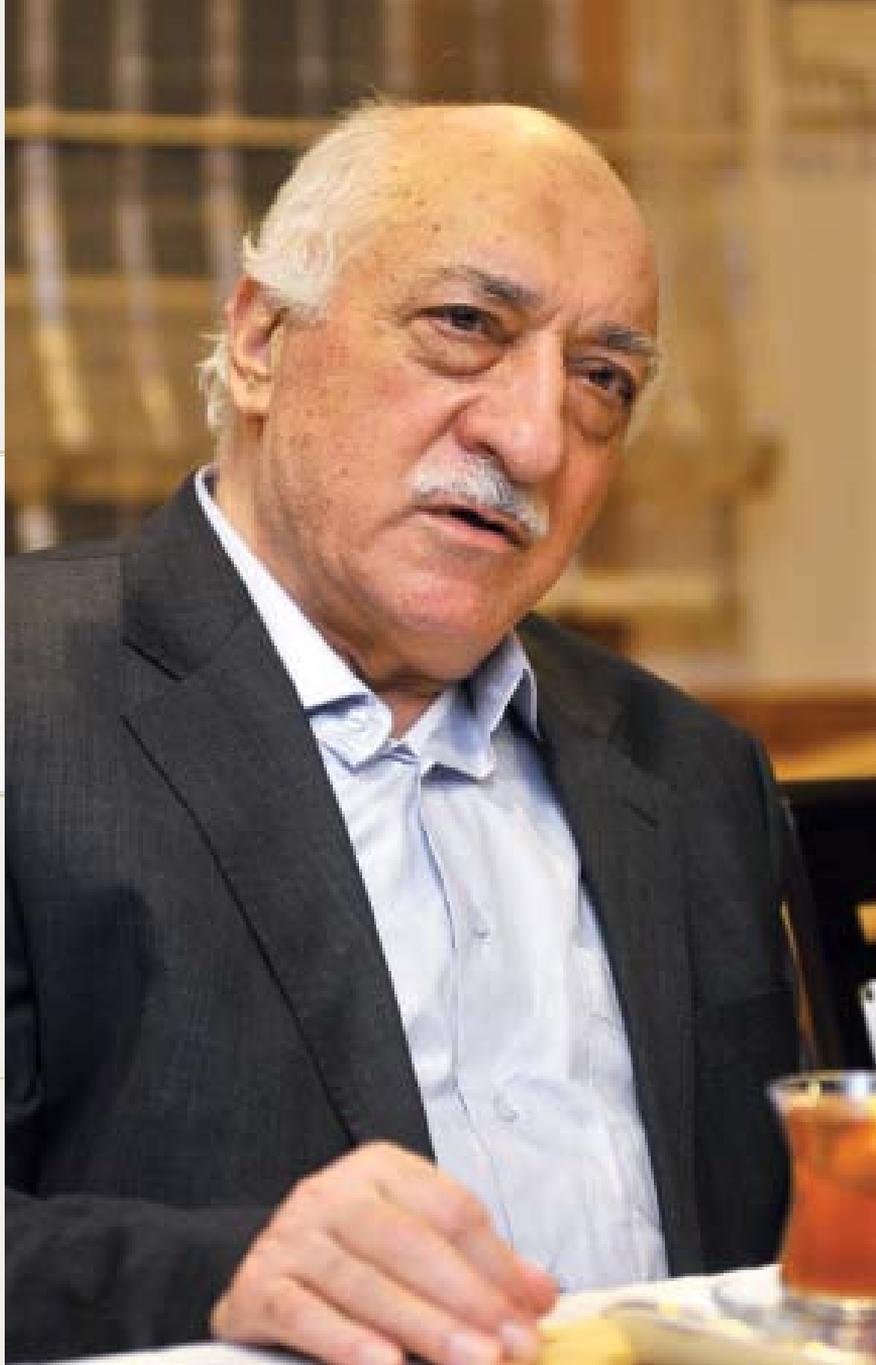
*Fethullah Gülen*

700,000

Circulation for the *Sızıntı* monthly magazine for which he has written the lead article for every issue since 1979.

82

The number of books he has authored, 65 in Turkish and another 17 in English covering topics such as sociology, politics, religion, art, science and sports.



❧ 10 ❧

*Hodjaefendi*

Fethullah Gülen

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/10](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/10)

# Hodjaefendi Fethullah Gülen

## Turkish Muslim Preacher

Fethullah Gülen is a preacher, thinker and educator, who having assumed the leadership of the Nurcu religious movement—started by Said Nursî (1878–1960 CE)—has gone on to become a global phenomenon in his own right. His popularity and authority in Turkey have been the driving force of the movement that is widely thought to have brought about the social and, eventually, political changes of which politician Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has been the ultimate heir—that is the enfranchisement of Muslim politics in Turkey. Despite his peaceful means of preaching and community organization, Gülen is hated by the secularist establishment in Turkey and has been living in the US since 1999.

**Humanitarian Reformer:** Gülen and his followers have devoted considerable energy in recent years on interreligious dialogue with tens of interfaith centers in Europe and the US being opened to foster better relations between faiths. Gülen is also the head of a series of socially oriented philanthropic efforts. His teaching emphasizes that there are no material shortages in the world, and that there is no justification for starvation. Gülen has established many charities to distribute wealth to the needy.

**Catalyst for Educational Change:** When Gülen began preaching in Izmir—in his youth—a network of pupils began to unite around his teachings—as a ‘social movement’ inspired by Gülen’s example. This movement has culminated in the development of around 300 schools in Turkey and hundreds more worldwide. Graduates from these private schools around the world are coached in ethics and philosophy that are inspired by Gülen’s teachings, and continue to take top honors in university placement tests.

**Influence in the Media:** The Gülen movement has opened hospitals and charities, a TV and radio station, as well as a bank—Asya Finans—that operates on Islamic principles. Gülen also has two major mass-circulation daily Turkish newspapers that are affiliated with his movement: ‘Zaman’ and the English-language ‘Today’s Zaman’. The Gülen network has also initiated a Journalists and Writers Foundation and a Teachers Foundation—providing an umbrella organization for a host of dialogue groups and charitable organizations.

**Intellectual:** Gülen is one of the most important thinkers and writers from Turkey, and among the most effective activists in twentieth-century Turkey. The Gülen movement is one of the best connected and therefore one of the most powerful networks competing to influence Muslims around the globe, making it likely to have an enduring impact on the modernization of Islam and its engagement with Western ideas. Belgium’s Catholic University of Leuven established a ‘Fethullah Gülen Chair’ (for Intellectual Studies). In 2008, Gülen topped the list of “The World’s Top 20 Public Intellectuals” by the magazines *Foreign Policy* and *Prospect*.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Gülen.

**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 1951 (Age 61)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** President of Egypt

**School of Thought:** Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

**2011 Rank:** Unranked

**2012 Rank:** 11

“Getting Egypt to pass through the bottleneck onto a better life, and employ all the wealth and resources and energies to bring about a renaissance and developed civilization.”

*Muhammad Morsi*

5<sup>TH</sup>

President of Egypt.

51.7%

Received 51.7% of the vote to win the Presidential Election.



11

*His Excellency President*  
**Muhammad Morsi Isa Al-Ayyat**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/11](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/11)

# H.E. Muhammad Morsi Isa Al-Ayyat

## President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

H.E. Muhammad Morsi Isa Al-Ayyat is the first democratically elected President of Egypt. He was sworn in on June 30, 2012, after having won 51.7% of the vote a week earlier. He was a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood, and became the first President of its Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) in 2011. Morsi is a professor of engineering and has taught in both US and Egyptian universities.

**Background:** Morsi was born in northern Egypt in August 1951 and received a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in engineering from Cairo University in 1975 and 1978, respectively. In 1982 he received his PhD from the US and then worked there as an Assistant Professor for three years. He then returned to Egypt to teach at Zagazig University.

**Second choice for President:** Morsi only emerged as the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate after their first choice, Khairat El-Shater was disqualified. Morsi had been a Member of Parliament from 2000 to 2005 and was already a leading figure in the Muslim Brotherhood. He became President of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), a political party, when it was founded by the Muslim Brotherhood in the wake of the 2011 Egyptian revolution. Morsi's reputation is one of an honest, steady workhorse rather than a dynamic, inspirational leader. The way he personally deals with issues will be under scrutiny as much as the end results.

**Challenges Ahead:** Morsi has many challenges facing him internally and externally; a highly vocal opposition, the military, inter-religious violence, poverty, unemployment are all urgent internal problems. Externally, he has the eyes of the world scrutinising his every move looking out for 'Islamic extremism', the situation in Gaza, and the relationship with Israel. The treatment of religious minorities will be carefully watched by all, especially international observers. He has recently shown great tact with the way he sidelined the power of the military and transferred this to civil rule.

## The Arab Summer?

- Arguably, the biggest winner of the Arab Spring in Egypt, Morsi has been catapulted into the position of President of Egypt with the moral authority of being democratically elected.
- He has shown political acuity in dealing with internal situations, and is now trying to reassert Egypt's leading role in the Arab world. However, many tests lie before him including how he will deal with a militarily aggressive Israel without breaking off ties.

**Country:** Oman

**Born:** 18 Nov 1940 (Age 72)

**Source of Influence:** Lineage, Political, Development

**Influence:** Leader of 2.9 million citizens and residents of Oman

**School of Thought:** Traditional Ibadi

**2009 Rank:** 6

**2010 Rank:** 6

**2011 Rank:** 9

**2012 Rank:** 12

“One of Oman’s firm principles is co-operation with all states and nations on the basis of mutual respect, mutual interest and non-interference in the affairs of others.”

*Sultan Qaboos*

1650

The year in which the Sultanate was established thus making it the oldest independent state in the Gulf.

5.1%

Oman has the lowest government debt among Gulf Arab oil exporters at a mere 5.1 percent of its annual economic output in 2010.



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12

*His Majesty*

Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'ud Aal Sa'ud

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/12](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/12)

# H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Aal Sa'id

## Sultan of Oman

Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Aal Sa'id, the 14th descendant of the Al Bu Sa'idi dynasty, is a socially and politically active monarch, who has ruled for over 40 years as Sultan. Sultan Qaboos has revolutionized and modernized Oman, transforming it from a poor, isolationist nation into a land closely-linked with the African continent and devoted to economic development, regional stability, and religious tolerance.

**Leader of Omani Sultanate:** Sultan Qaboos Aal Sa'id reigns over a country strategically situated in the Gulf region. Oman has a stake in the crude oil market due to the Strait of Hormuz, which connects the Gulf of Oman to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea, producing over 757,000 barrels of crude oil per day in 2008, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Historically, Oman is significant as one of the only countries with a large population of Ibadi Muslims and as the most authoritative state in the Ibadi movement—one that is recognized as one of the oldest schools of Islamic thought.

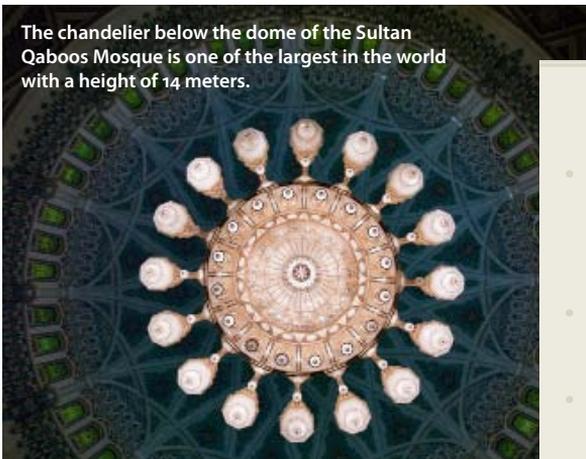
**Beacon of Islam:** Sultan Qaboos has helped build or restore thousands of mosques at his personal expense, the grandest being the Sultan Qaboos Mosque, which can accommodate up to 20,000 worshippers. The Sultan is a discreet but strong supporter of moderate Islam and has created a unique Islamic culture in Oman that has carefully combined the best of traditional Islam with the benefits of the modern world. Sultan Qaboos has promoted culturally-specific Islamic dress, art, architecture and education, and is a keen advocate of environmentalism. This quiet, measured rise has made Oman a hidden pearl of the Islamic world.

**Personal Leadership:** The Sultan has raised the Omani standard of living by building up Oman's school system, health care, infrastructure, and

economy. He cites political participation as one of his major long-term goals. Within the last two decades, he has introduced political reforms; including a bicameral representative body, a basic law, universal suffrage, and a supreme court. Moreover, despite Oman's relative lack of oil and gas compared to other Gulf States, the Sultan has invested his country's wealth so wisely that all citizens are guaranteed free education up to the doctoral level (should they qualify); free health care; free land; soft loans for building homes; jobs and social security for the disabled, orphans and widows. Furthermore, unlike neighboring countries, Oman has resolved all its border demarcation issues with all its neighbors, has no foreign debt and has a Sovereign Wealth Reserve Fund of over 30 billion Riyals (about \$100 billion). Oman is thus arguably the best administrated country in the Islamic world, if not in the whole world.

**International Leader:** Sultan Qaboos has been recognized by organizations such as the United Nations and the National Council of US-Arab Relations for his leadership in the Persian Gulf region. In 2008, he presided over the GCC Summit, where he was commended for his ongoing efforts toward political and economic cooperation amongst the GCC states. Sultan Qaboos has made an effort to strengthen ties between Oman and Iran, as well as the strategic partnership between Oman and India—showing the Sultan's foresight in carving foreign policy independent of that of his Arab neighbors.

The chandelier below the dome of the Sultan Qaboos Mosque is one of the largest in the world with a height of 14 meters.



## The Arab Summer?

- The Sultan responded quickly to the protests by ordering political reforms, creating 50,000 government jobs and providing a monthly benefit of \$390 to the unemployed. The Sultan also instituted an elected legislative.
- Moreover, popular demonstrations showed that the Sultan still commands massive popular support in Oman.
- The Arab Spring in Oman is effectively over.

**Country:** Iraq

**Born:** 4 Aug 1930 (Age 82)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage

**Influence:** Highest authority for 17–20 million Iraqi Shi'a, and also internationally as a religious authority to Usuli Twelver Shi'a

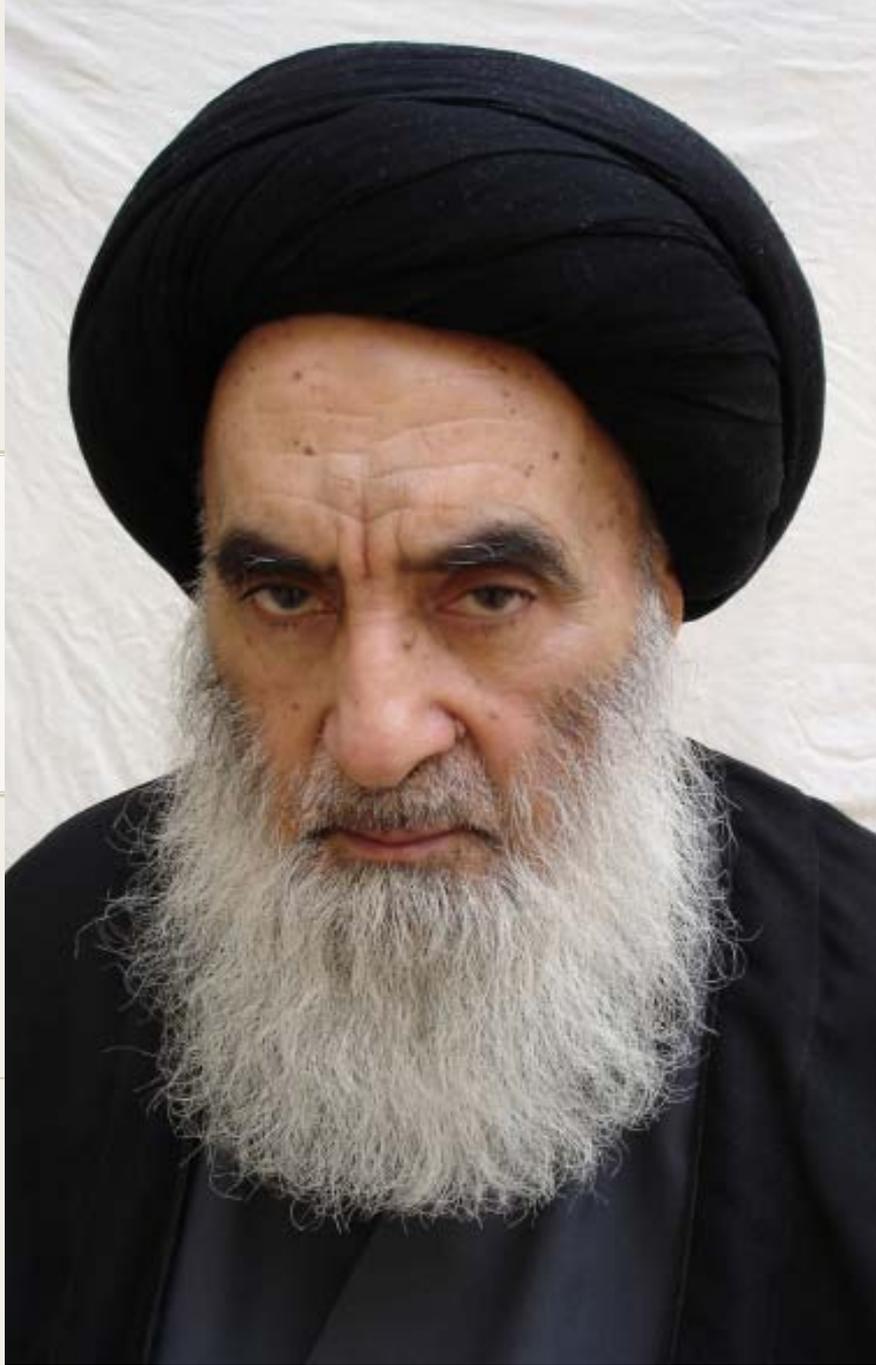
**School of Thought:** Traditional Twelver Shi'a, Usuli

**2009 Rank:** 7

**2010 Rank:** 8

**2011 Rank:** 10

**2012 Rank:** 13



“Do not refer to the Sunnis as our other brothers, but refer to them as ‘Us.’”

*Ayatollah Sistani*

50,000

The number of students that Sistani supports in Iran.

38

The number of books that he has published, six of which have been translated into English.

❧ 13 ❧

*His Eminence Grand Ayatollah*  
**Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/13](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/13)

# H.E. Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani

## Marja of the Hawza, Najaf, Iraq

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani is the prime marja, or spiritual reference for Ithna'Ashari'a (Twelver) Shi'a Muslims. He is the leading sheikh of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq and the preeminent Shi'a cleric globally. Sistani is one of the most respected of the marjaiyya—the highest position of authority in the Usuli school of Twelver Shi'a fiqh.

**Preeminent Shi'a Cleric & Marja Taqlid:** Sistani's influence in the Twelver Shi'a sect stems from his scholarly lineage and education, which have enabled him to reach the status of *marja taqlid*—the highest status in the Usuli branch of Twelver Shi'a Islam. *Marja taqlid* means literally one who is worthy of being imitated— placing Sistani in a position of great authority over Twelver Shi'a Muslims. There are currently only 29 marjas worldwide. Sistani is descended from a family of religious scholars, and was educated in the leading institutions in Iran. He later went to Najaf, Iraq to study under the Grand Ayatollah Abu Al-Qasim Al-Khoei. On Al-Khoei's death in 1992, Sistani took over as grand ayatollah, inheriting Al-Khoei's following. He soon rose to become the leading cleric in Iraq. With the recent opening of Iraqi shrines to Iranian tourists, Sistani is gaining a following outside of Iraq.

**Financial Influence:** Sistani also has very significant financial clout due to his position as *marja*. As a *marja* his followers give him a religious tax (*khums*, Arabic for one fifth). The redistribution of this tax for the common good is one of the key roles of a marja. Much of this remittance is redistributed through the Al-Khoei Foundation—the largest Twelver Shi'a development organization in the world that maintains a network of educational and humanitarian establishments for both Shi'a and non-Shi'a Muslims.

**Quietist Influence:** Significantly, Sistani is against the idea of Velayat-e Faqih, suggesting Shi'a clerics should not get involved in politics. Paradoxically this approach has afforded him very strong influence as a religious leader unsullied by politics. This became clear after the Iraq invasion when Sistani issued a legal ruling (*fatwa*) calling on the clergy to guide Iraq's populace, and later during the 2005 elections when he issued a ruling telling Shi'a women that they were religiously obliged to vote. Ali Sistani has used his position of quietist authority to wield influence also as a peacemaker in the turbulent post-invasion Iraq. At a time when Sistani was losing support to Sheikh Muqtada Al-Sadr, he showed his sway by arranging a lasting deal between Al-Sadr and US forces at the Imam Ali Shrine in Najaf in 2005—a deal that secured the Shrine and pushed for an American retreat. Sistani was vocal about encouraging Iraqis to participate in the 2010 parliamentary elections. He strongly condemned the Baghdad church attack in October 2010 and also advised Iraqi security forces to take more responsibility for the protection of Iraqi citizens.

Tile-work containing the names of the family of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) at the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, Iraq.



## The Arab Summer?

- Ayatollah Sistani has continuously supported the Arab Spring in other countries, without mentioning the protest movement in Iran.

**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 3 Mar 1953 (Age 59)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly,  
Political

**Influence:** Legal authority for 80  
million Egyptian Muslims

**School of Thought:** Traditional  
Sunni

**2009 Rank:** 9

**2010 Rank:** 10

**2011 Rank:** 12

**2012 Rank:** 14

“This is not just an attack on  
Copts, this is an attack on me  
and you and all Egyptians, on  
Egypt and its history and its  
symbols, by terrorists who  
know no God, no patriotism,  
and no humanity,”

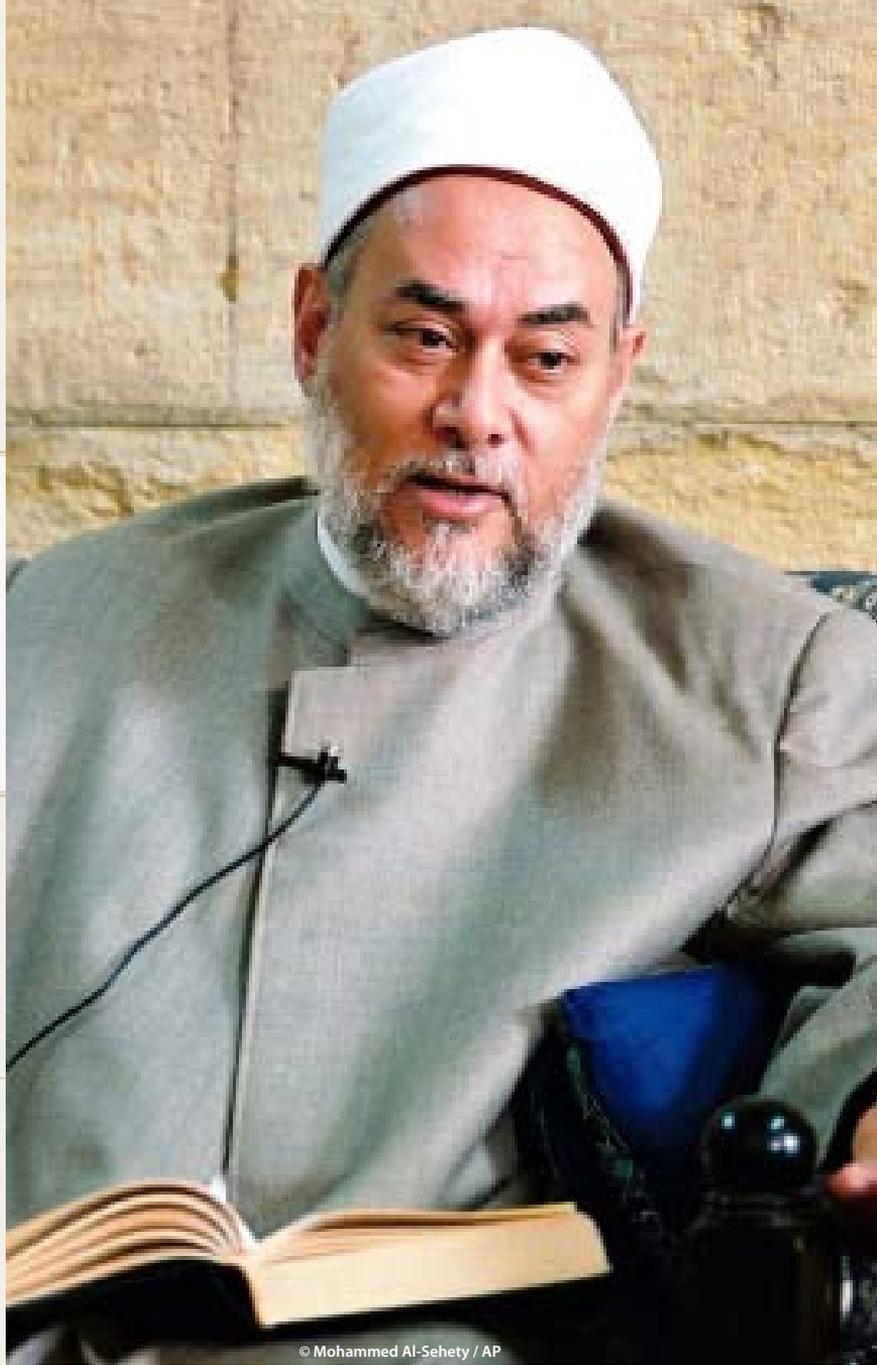
*Sh. Dr Ali Goma'a*

30,000

The number of books in his per-  
sonal library which is sought  
out by students and researchers  
from around the world in need  
of rare texts.

5,000

The number of fatwas that his  
office issues a week. The offi-  
cial ones that he himself crafts  
are on the more important and  
complex issues.



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*His Eminence*

Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/14](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/14)

# H.E. Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a

## Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Sheikh Ali Goma'a is the Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt. He is the second highest Sunni authority in Egypt after Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tayyeb and one of the foremost Islamic scholars in the world. Goma'a is responsible for the Dar al-Ifta al-Masriyyah, a leading institute for Islamic legal research, and the legal arm of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, which is responsible for passing official religious rulings. It issued close to 465,000 fatwas in the year 2010.

**Egypt's Weight in Islamic Scholarship:** Goma'a's scholarly influence is derived from his position at the center of many of the most significant institutions of Islamic law in the world. Before becoming Grand Mufti, Goma'a was a professor of jurisprudence at Al-Azhar University—the second oldest university in the world, founded in 975 CE—Goma'a also served as a member of the Fatwa Council. He is currently a member of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, the highest institute of Islamic law in the Organization of the Islamic Conference—an intergovernmental organization for Muslim-majority countries.

**Visit to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Controversy:** On April 18th, 2012, Sheikh Ali Goma'a, with HRH Prince Ghazi of Jordan, broke what had been a 45 year taboo in some parts of the Islamic World (propagated notably by Al-Jazeera-based Sheikh Al-Qaradawi) and visited Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa in order to pray there and support the beleaguered Muslim community in Jerusalem. The visit was viewed as controversial in Egypt, but set off a change of public opinion in the Islamic World that continues to this day. The Grand Mufti also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was much appreciated by the Christian community of Jerusalem.

**Personal Popularity:** Goma'a has become exceedingly popular as a mufti since he began to appear on popular broadcast and satellite television. Part of his appeal is due to the revival of the old Islamic practice of informal 'knowledge circles' at the Al-Azhar Mosque, and very well attended Q&A sessions after his Friday sermons at the Sultan Hasan Mosque, where Goma'a makes a point of taking on anyone who tries to simplify or distort Islamic

teachings without knowledge of its traditions. This has made him extremely popular with those who are against extremism. He has published regular articles in mainstream US papers like the New York Times, and the Washington Post.

**Popularized and Simplified Fatwas:** Goma'a has immense legal influence through his advocacy of Islamic religious edicts (fatwas). Since he was appointed Grand Mufti of Egypt in 2003, Goma'a has modernized the process of issuing fatwas in the country. He has done this by overhauling the Dar al Ifta organization into a dynamic institution with worldwide reach, based on a fatwa council and a system of checks and balances. Goma'a has recently been outspoken on environmental sustainability—speaking in November, 2009 about plans to make Medina the first "green" Islamic city.

**High-Tech Influence:** Goma'a has authored over 50 books, as well as hundreds of articles. He now uses the Dar al Ifta to get his scholarly opinion out. His office issues some 5,000 fatwas a week, with official ones on important issues written by him and the routine ones dealt with via phone and the Internet by a team of subordinate muftis. Goma'a believes that respect for traditionalism is growing in the Muslim world, partly because of the immense demand for fatwas issued by his office.

## The Arab Summer?

- One of the few figures who held to traditional Islamic Law despite the vogue of the Arab Spring.

Country: UAE

Born: 3 Oct 1961 (Age 51)

Source of Influence: Administrative, Development, Philanthropy

Influence: Military and political leadership.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 22

2010 Rank: 22

2011 Rank: 18

2012 Rank: 15



“The real asset of any nation is in its people ... and the prosperity and success of a country are measured by the standard of education available to all its citizens.”

*Sheikh M. Al-Nahyan*

**\$23<sup>BIL</sup>**

His estimated worth in dollars by Forbes Magazine in 2010, a significant decrease from previous years.

**\$59<sup>MIL</sup>**

The amount of money (US dollars) pledged to fund the purchase and delivery of vaccines for children in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

© Ho New / Reuters

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*His Highness General Sheikh*  
**Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/15](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/15)

# H.H. General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

## Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi & Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan is the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, as well as next in line to be President of the United Arab Emirates. The UAE is increasingly becoming an important centre for global weapons trading with Abu Dhabi host to one of the world's largest defence expos.

**Political and Military Leadership:** Sheikh Mohammed is chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council—an executive leadership body in Abu Dhabi, which is constantly engaged in the assessment of public policy. Since becoming Crown Prince in 2004, Sheikh Mohammed has been recognized for his groundbreaking initiatives as an influential leader of Abu Dhabi as well as Deputy Supreme Commander of the armed forces. He is a special advisor to UAE President H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

**Economic Development:** With Abu Dhabi sitting on a 10th of the world's proven oil reserves, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan maintains immense political influence in the Muslim World as a leading member of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company—which directs development efforts for the UAE's role in the oil and gas industries. In spite of the debt crisis affecting Gulf states, Abu Dhabi has emerged mostly unscathed. Sheikh Mohammed is chairman of the Abu Dhabi Council for Economic Development (ADCED), which has been developing initiatives to boost entrepreneurship among youth in the UAE.

**Humanitarian:** Sheikh Mohammed is noted for his philanthropic and humanitarian efforts in charitable giving. He has donated billions of dollars to various causes. December 2010 marked the launch of a three-year project to establish a global center for health care research in Abu Dhabi through the World Health Care Congress (WHCC), under the patronage of Sheikh Mohammed.

**Sustainable Development:** Sheikh Mohammed has been a champion of sustainable development in Abu Dhabi as an advocate for the implementation of green technologies. He pledged \$15 billion for the development of clean energy through solar, wind, and hydrogen power.

## The Arab Summer?

- Joined NATO in enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya, and supports the Free Syrian Army.
- Moved quickly to respond to any protests in UAE; (these in fact only involved 5 bloggers).

**Country:** Qatar

**Born:** 9 Sept 1926 (Age 86)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly

**Influence:** Leading scholar for global Muslim Brotherhood movement, host of popular show with over 40 million viewers worldwide

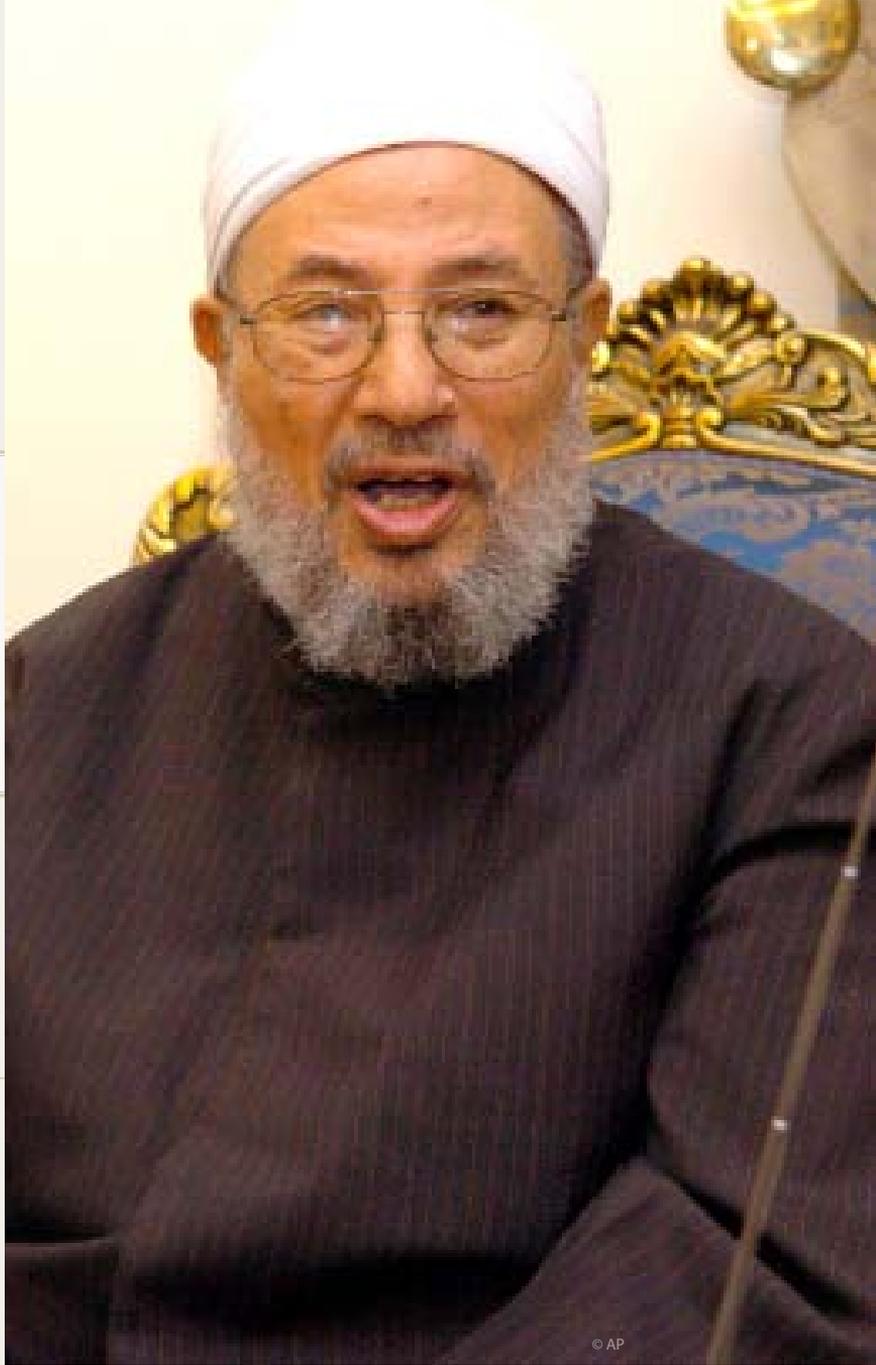
**School of Thought:** Muslim Brotherhood/Salafi

2009 Rank: 9

2010 Rank: 14

2011 Rank: 13

2012 Rank: 16



“All Muslims ought to be united against all those who terrorize the innocents, and those who permit the killing of non-combatants without a justifiable reason.”

*Yusuf Al-Qaradawi*

40<sup>MIL</sup>

The number of viewers who watch his Al Jazeera broadcast 'Islamic Law and Life'.

7,238

The estimated number of sites that link to IslamOnline.net daily.

❧ 16 ❧

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/16](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/16)

# Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

## Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi is a preeminent Egyptian scholar. Articulate and widely read, he is one of the most widely commented on scholars of Islam. Al-Qaradawi is a founder of the website IslamOn line, one of the intellectual leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, and the most influential leader associated with the movement since Mahdi Akef stepped down from his position as Supreme Leader in January 2010.

**Post Mubarak Era:** In February 2011, Qaradawi returned to Egypt after a 30 year exile and addressed a crowd of over a million people at Tahrir Square during Friday prayers. He addressed all segments of Egyptian society (including the Copts and the military) and called for unity and a return to civilian rule.

**Arab Spring:** Qaradawi has vocally supported the 'Arab Spring' movements. He issued a fatwa encouraging Libyan soldiers to shoot and kill Colonel Gaddafi, and supported the no-fly zone imposed over Libya. He has strongly criticised the current Syrian government for committing atrocities, but has not supported the protests in Bahrain, calling them 'sectarian' in nature.

**Leading Scholar of the Muslim Brotherhood:** Qaradawi is incredibly influential as an intellectual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood—one of the most important modern movements in Islam. He has twice turned down offers to be their leader—in 1976 and 2004—preferring to be free of institutional restrictions. Qaradawi grew up and matured with the Muslim Brotherhood but has distanced himself from the movement in recent years. As early as 1997 he went out of his way to explain his independence from any organization, stating categorically that he was not a member of the Brotherhood. Earlier in his life Qaradawi was jailed three times for his relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood and subsequently stripped of his Egyptian citizenship in the 1970s—driving him to seek exile in Qatar. The Muslim Brotherhood remains the main opposition force in Egypt. Although he has no formal relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, his writings make him an important intellectual figure in the Muslim Brotherhood movement.

**Popular Influence:** Qaradawi is a vociferous voice of criticism of the West and of Israel. Much of Qaradawi's influence over the past decade has been a product of his forthright views on combating social injustice, especially concerning Israeli-Palestinian relations. His view that suicide bombing, in certain situations, is a legitimate form of self-defense has landed him in trouble, especially in Western Europe, but is reflective of an underlying sentiment among many in the Middle East that oppression deserves such a response—however Qaradawi goes against the grain of most leading Islamic thinkers by supporting suicide bombing as a tactic of war.

**Scholar for Modern Times:** Qaradawi's ability to combine knowledge of traditional Islamic Law with a contemporary understanding of the issues that Muslims face today, has led him to become one of the best known and most influential contemporary Muslim clerics of our time. He uses a variety of means to connect with people. He is well known for his popular Al Jazeera program *Ash-Shariah wal-Hayat* (Islamic Law and Life) that is watched by an estimated 40-50 million people worldwide. Despite his popularity, Qaradawi is often criticized by fellow scholars regarding his methodology and his occasionally unusual opinions. He does, however, continue to be respected as a knowledgeable scholar and has been praised for his condemnation of the September 11th attacks.

## The Arab Summer?

- Qaradawi has been a vocal supporter of all the Arab protests with the exception of the protests in Bahrain. He even issued a fatwa calling for Libyan soldiers to kill Colonel Gaddafi.
- Qaradawi was reluctant to give support to the 2011 Bahrain protests, claiming that: 'The protests in Bahrain are sectarian in nature.'
- He has called for a boycott of Russia and Iran because of their support for the Syrian government. He has condemned the Syrian government's actions against Syrian civilians.

**Country:** Pakistan

**Born:**1923 (Age 89)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Administrative

**Influence:** Leader of an international organization with chapters in 120 countries and annual conferences that attract millions.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Hanafi

2009 Rank: 15

2010 Rank: 16

2011 Rank: 16

2012 Rank: 17



“People out there are burning in the fire of ignorance and you are wasting your time here inquiring after my health!”

*Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi, Abd Al-Wahhab's teacher and the founder of Tablighi Jamaat.*

120

The number of countries that have chapters of the Tablighi Jamaat.

3 MIL

The estimated number of people who showed up to Tablighi Jamaat's annual gathering, the Biswa Ijtimā, in Bangladesh.

﴿ 17 ﴾

*Amir Hajji*

Muhammad Abd Al-Wahhab

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/17](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/17)

# Amir Hajji Muhammad Abd Al-Wahhab

## Amir of Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan

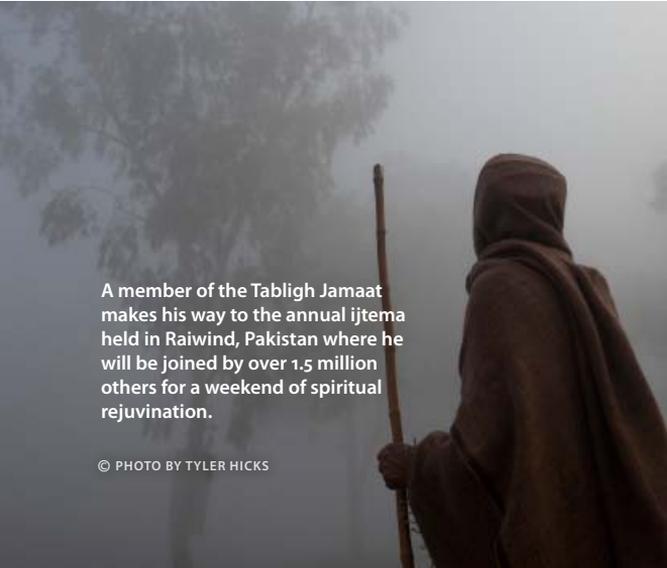
Leader of the Pakistan chapter of the Tablighi Jamaat—a transnational Islamic organization dedicated to spreading the message of religious conservatism and renewed spirituality—Hajji Abd Al-Wahhab is a prominent Pakistani scholar with a significant following in South Asia and the United Kingdom. Although the organization does not have a central authority, Abd Al-Wahhab has been increasingly influential in his leadership of the throngs of Muslims that follow the international movement in Pakistan and abroad.

**Missionary:** As Amir, or leader of Pakistan's Tablighi Jamaat, Hajji Abd Al-Wahhab's influence spans globally due to the organization's emphasis on missionary work. Considered a foremost da'ee, or inviter to the faith of Islam, Abd Al-Wahhab has spoken about the need to return to the correct beliefs and practices of Islam in numerous countries and congregations.

**Champion of Conservatism:** Abd Al-Wahhab urges Muslims to repent for their sins and to emulate the life of the Prophet Muhammad by adhering to the Sunnah—the Prophet's teachings and deeds. Among these is an exhortation to partake in the act of da'wa or spreading the message of the faith. The Tablighi Jamaat has gradually acquired a massive membership base owing to this core tenet. Abd Al-Wahhab's work is derived from close ties to the founder of the Tablighi Jamaat, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelvi, and stems from the prominent Islamic institution Darul Uloom Deoband, in India, where the latter studied before establishing a following in Pakistan.

**Mass Appeal:** Among the throngs of Pakistanis, diaspora South Asians, and others who carry the flag of the Tablighi Jamaat are notable Muslim leaders. In Pakistan alone, Abd Al-Wahhab's influence has won the allegiance of prominent politicians, actors, and athletes. Despite his influence over key Muslim leaders from various fields of social power, Abd Al-Wahhab is consistent in his assertion that the organization is wholly apolitical—identifying the work of the Tablighi Jamaat as a spiritual revivalist movement.

**Advocate of Non-violence:** In light of heightened incidences of violence by fringe Islamic militant groups, Abd Al-Wahhab has publicly stated the importance of non-violence in bringing people closer to the faith of Islam. This comes after the tragic Mumbai attacks which investigations found were linked to the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba; a militant organization Abd Al-Wahhab has made a point of distancing the Tablighi Jamaat from.



A member of the Tablighi Jamaat makes his way to the annual ijtema held in Raiwind, Pakistan where he will be joined by over 1.5 million others for a weekend of spiritual rejuvenation.

© PHOTO BY TYLER HICKS

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Hajji Abd Al Wahhab.

**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 1941 (Age 71)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Administrative

**Influence:** Grand Mufti to 26.2 million Saudi residents and the global network of Salafi Muslims

**School of Thought:** Salafi

**2009 Rank:** 11

**2010 Rank:** 11

**2011 Rank:** 14

**2012 Rank:** 18

“The ethics of a true believer are portrayed in his brother, for when he sees good deeds he encourages him ... And if he perceives any sort of violation and abuse of Sharia, he seeks to set him on the right path and amend (him).”

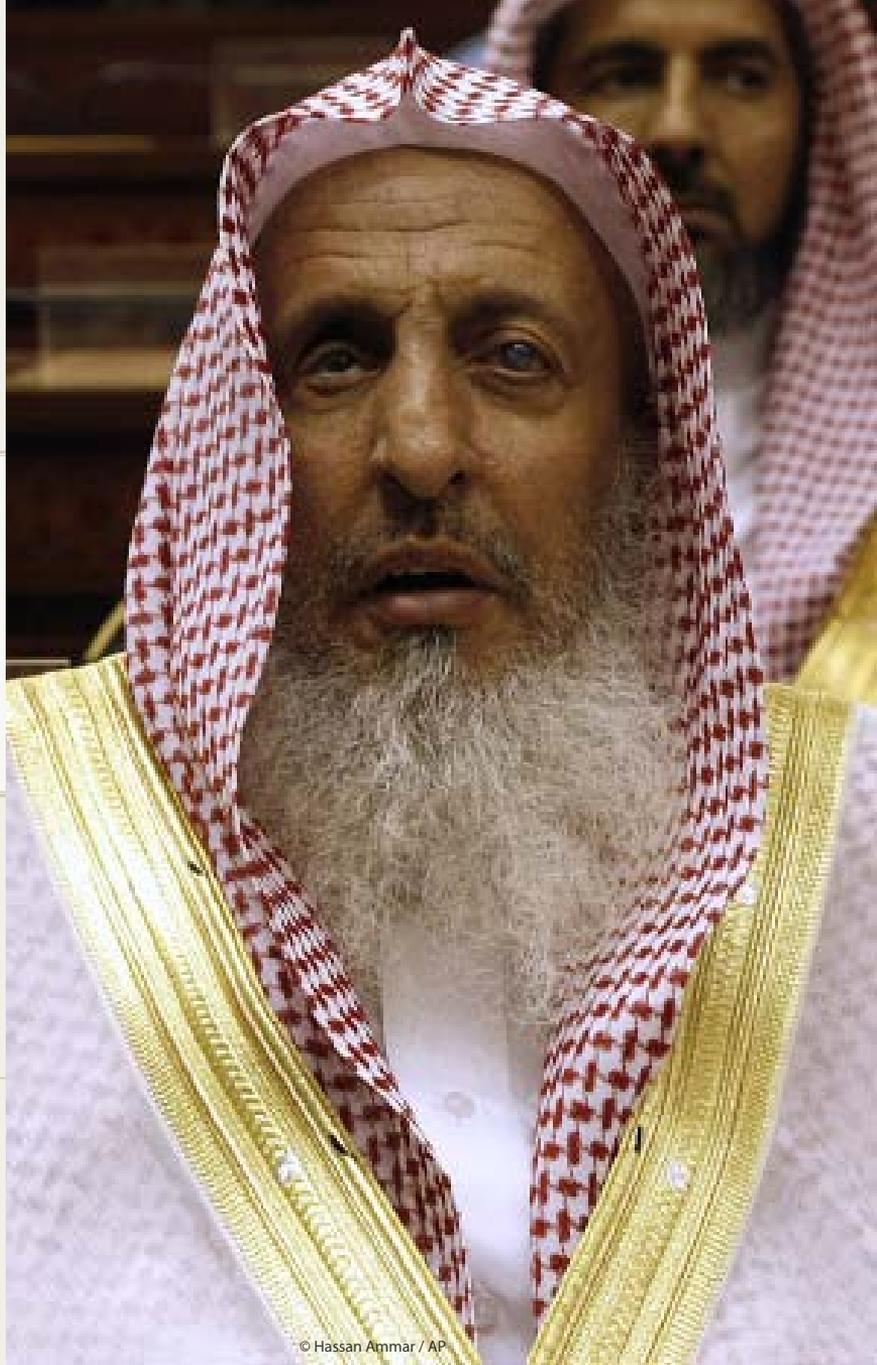
*Sh. Abdul Aziz Aal Al-Sheikh*

12

The age at which he memorized the entire Qur'an.

20

The age at which he lost his eyesight, 51 years ago.



© Hassan Ammar / AP

18

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Abdul Aziz Aal Al-Sheikh

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/18](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/18)

# H.E. Sheikh Abdul Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh

## Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

As the Grand Mufti, Sheikh Abdul Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh has the highest position of religious authority in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is an Islamic scholar based in Mecca and has influence as a leading cleric of the expansive global movement of Salafi Muslims.

**Salafi Lineage:** The Aal Al-Sheikh family in Saudi Arabia traditionally controls the religious and justice establishments. They are descended from Muhammad ibn Abd Al-Wahhab (1703–1792), the founder of Wahabi and Salafi thought, and for 250 years have been closely associated and intermarried with the ruling Al Saud family.

**Head of Sunni Jurisprudential Committees:** Sheikh Abdul Aziz Aal Al-Sheikh is chairman of the Council of Senior Scholars, a consultative commission composed of leading Sunni specialist scholars of Sharia (Islamic law). He has been behind fatwas that call for more rights for women and children.

Aal Al-Sheikh is also chairman of the Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and fatwas (religious edicts), a special committee designated for the researching and issuing of religious rulings and edicts on jurisprudence, the Hadith, and Aqida (creed) for the Sunni world.

As head of the Presidency for Scientific Research and Religious Edicts (Dar al Ifta), Al-Sheikh is often the spokesperson for controversial rulings issued from the Kingdom. He is recognized for his influence in enforcing a distinct view of Islamic tradition. In 2008, he publicly criticized Muslim televangelists who encouraged Muslims to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries—stressing, instead, that only the two occasions of Eid and the weekly Friday observations are valid occasions to celebrate. In this, and also in

his condemnation of Turkish soap operas sweeping the Arab world, Aal Al-Sheikh has stressed the importance of eliminating distracting practices. He is also ardently opposed to the practice of marrying off very young girls to older men, emphasizing its incongruence with human decency and Islamic tradition.

**Central Figure of Global Salafi Movement:** As Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Al-Sheikh is the leading religious figure of the Saudi-based network of Salafi Muslims. The rulings derived by Al-Sheikh are based heavily on a literal reading of the Qur'an and emphasize the need to strip away innovative cultural practices that have become a part of Muslims' lives. The movement he leads is characterized by an authoritative stance on Islamic religious practice.

**Eminent Scholarship:** Grand Mufti Al-Sheikh is recognized as a leading contemporary scholar of Islam. He leveraged this influence by openly speaking out against Al-Qaeda as an entity that pushes a dangerous ideological terrorism. He spoke for the need for a war—to be fought by academics, the media, religious leaders and even parents—against deviant thought that leads overzealous Muslims toward extremism and violence.

## The Arab Summer?

- He and 18 other members of the Council of Senior Scholars in Saudi Arabia signed a fatwa prohibiting demonstrations. The argument for this is that Saudi Arabia is based on the Qur'an and Sunnah and that it is necessary to stay hand in hand and in obedience. Thus, reform can be accomplished through advice, not by demonstrations or methods that give rise to discord or divide the nation.

**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 3 July 1953 (Age 59)

**Source of Influence:** Administrative, Political, Education

**Influence:** Leader of approximately 30 million members of the *Nahdlatul Ulama*

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2009 Rank:** Unlisted

**2010 Rank:** 19

**2011 Rank:** 17

**2012 Rank:** 19

“I am not interested in any political offers. I will never run for any presidential or vice presidential election; for me Nahdlatul Ulama chairman is the highest position [of all];”

*KH Said Aqil Siradj*



183,000

Facebook likes

30<sup>MIL</sup>

The estimated number of members in the NU.

19

*Dr*

KH Said Aqil Siradj

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/19](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/19)

# Dr K.H. Said Aqil Siradj

## Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama

Dr K.H. Said Aqil Siradj is the leader of Indonesia's largest independent Muslim organization and one of the world's most influential Islamic organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), or 'Awakening of Scholars'. Siradj, whose 5-year term as chairman began in March 2010, guides millions through his work with the NU.

**Head of Expansive Network:** The Nahdlatul Ulama boasts an expansive network that covers 30 regions with 339 branches, 12 special branches, 2,630 representative councils and 37,125 sub-branch representative councils across Indonesia. This network practices the doctrine of Ahlissunah wal Jama'ah, which is Arabic for 'people of the Sunnah (practices of the Prophet Muhammad) and the community'. They base their practices on the traditional sources of Islamic jurisprudence—mainly the Qur'an, Hadith, and major schools of law. Among its aims are the propagation of Nahdlatul Ulama's message and also an expansion of its already extensive network of members in Indonesia. This is the basis of many of the organization's social reform efforts. With a solid structure of central and regional boards, branch and special branch boards, and various advisory councils, Siradj sits at the top of this increasingly influential Sunni movement.

**Model of Traditionalism:** With a mainly rural membership base, the Nahdlatul Ulama distinguishes itself from other Islamic organizations in Indonesia by positioning itself as a premier organization of traditional Islam—with an emphasis on education and political engagement based on Islamic principles.

**Social Service:** The Nahdlatul Ulama has made substantial charitable contributions to Indonesian society in the fields of educational development, health care, and poverty alleviation. Siradj, like his predecessors, propagates the Nahdlatul Ulama as an organization that is geared toward establishing a secular nation-state based on a body of modern and moderate Muslims—with agenda items such as anti-corruption laws and social reform measures that are deeply rooted in Islamic principles.

**Human Rights Activism:** Prior to his role as Nahdlatul Ulama chairman, Siradj served on Indonesia's National Commission for Human Rights. Only a few weeks into his position as chairman of the country's largest Muslim political party, and after violent clashes erupted in different churches across the country, Siradj made strong statements condemning the discrimination against Christian minority groups in Indonesia.

**Educational Reform:** Siradj has an extensive academic background in the Islamic sciences, and regards education as a tool for development. He founded the Said Aqil Centre in Egypt, a study centre that focuses on developing Islamic discourse, particularly in the Arab world.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Dr Siradj.

**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** May 1955 (Age 57)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Media

**Influence:** 53 published books, supervises IslamToday.net, and reaches millions through TV

**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

**2009 Rank:** 19

**2010 Rank:** 25

**2011 Rank:** 19

**2012 Rank:** 20

“When we stumble and forget ourselves, this should make us all the more vigilant to maintain our dignity and composure in the future: to be patient, to pardon and to overlook.”

*Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda*

559,708

Number of people who have liked his Facebook page with an additional 413,024 followers on Twitter at the time of publication.

53

The number of his publications.



20

*Sheikh*

Salman Al-Ouda

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/20](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/20)

# Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda

## Saudi Scholar and Educator

A leading Saudi sheikh, Salman Al-Ouda is a former hard-line cleric turned advocate of peaceful coexistence. He is increasingly influential due to his innovative reach in the Muslim World propagated via IslamToday.net and his persistent efforts at ministering to the needs of the global Muslim community.

**Key Scholar of Salafi Network:** Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda is a leading scholar of the Salafi movement. Although he is not noted for propagating innovative ideas within the network, he has notable influence in the movement due to his use of multiple modes of education (the Internet, audiovisual media, and print) to educate the large body of Salafi Muslims in the Islamic sciences. Sheikh Al-Ouda's website brings together a diverse range of Islamic scholars and educators to provide guidance in Islamic thought.

**Influence Through Virtual Islamic Resources:** Sheikh Al-Ouda supervises all content published on IslamToday.net—a website that offers virtual resources for Islamic education in multiple languages. His work has far-reaching impact in an age when religion is spread through media and technology, with IslamToday.net at the forefront of this trend.

In response to a February 2010 ruling from the Al-Azhar Fatwa Committee condemning the use of Facebook, Sheikh Al-Ouda defended the social networking website, stating that he uses it to communicate with Muslims across the globe and to provide Islamic guidance online. Sheikh Al-Ouda has a following of over half a million on Facebook and nearly that many views of his official videos on YouTube.

**Innovative Educator:** Al-Ouda developed a following from weekly talks at his local mosque in Buraydah and has become an authority for Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide who access IslamToday.net—a Saudi-funded website dedicated to providing Islamic educational resources in English, Arabic, French and Chinese. He also addresses Islamic issues on the Saudi satellite channel MBC.

**Ambassador of Non-violence:** In an effort to distance himself from alleged connections to perpetrators of terrorism, Al-Ouda is outspoken about the importance of inculcating love and mercy as opposed to violence (except in valid cases of self-defense) in the daily lives of Muslims. As a prominent member of the International Union for Muslim Scholars, he led the delegation in talks with Arab heads of state regarding the need for them to unite in opposition to Israel's siege of Gaza in early 2009.

## The Arab Summer?

- He praised the Arab Spring in Egypt and condemned Gaddafi in Libya.
- He has urged Saudi youth not to fight the Syrian government as this would give the government an excuse that 'outside forces' are interfering.

**Country:** Syria

**Born:** 1933 (Age 79)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly

**Influence:** More than 75 thousand students in Damascus alone

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

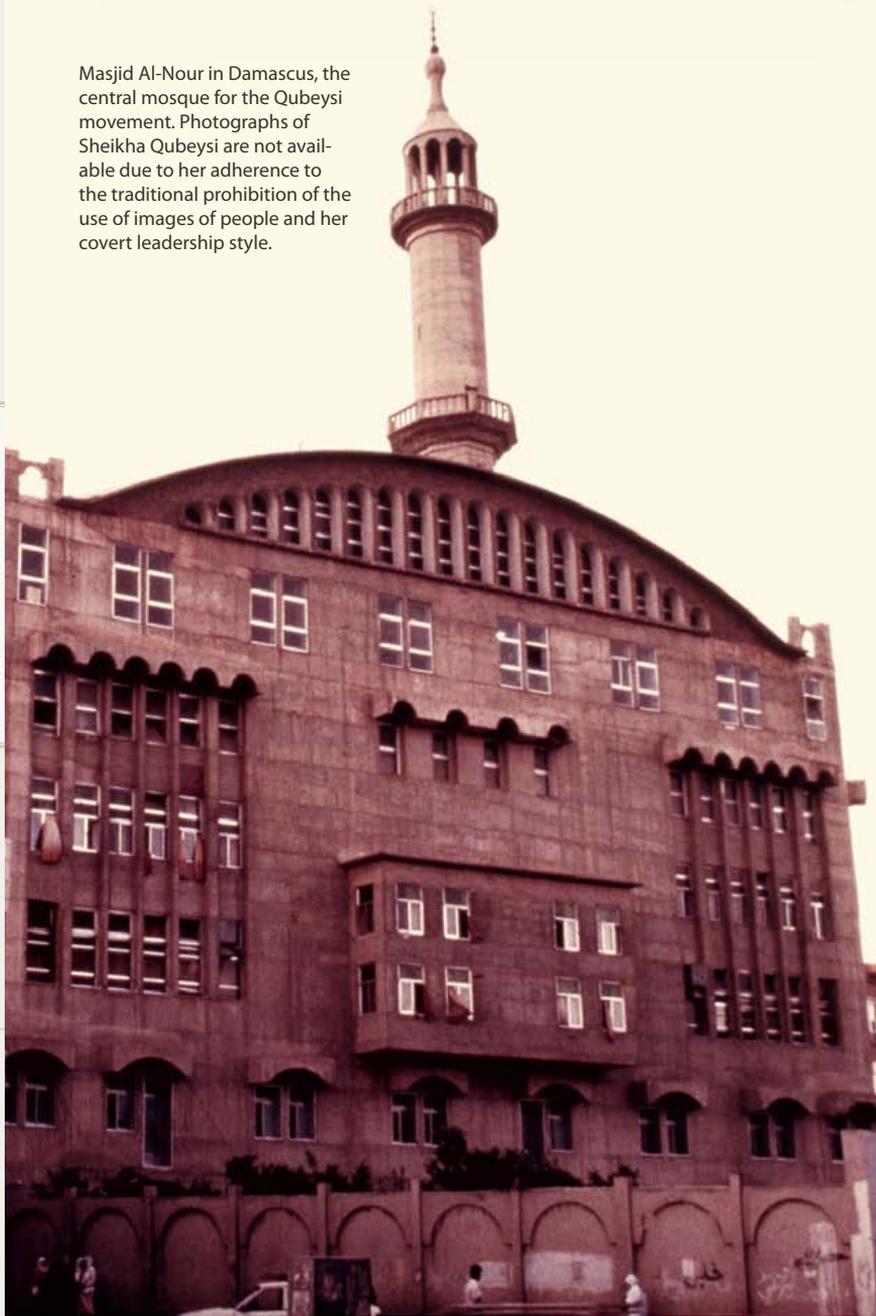
**2009 Rank:** 31

**2010 Rank:** 24

**2011 Rank:** 24

**2012 Rank:** 21

Masjid Al-Nour in Damascus, the central mosque for the Qubeysi movement. Photographs of Sheikha Qubeysi are not available due to her adherence to the traditional prohibition of the use of images of people and her covert leadership style.



“To be asked to join the Qubaisiate is very prestigious”

*Maan Abdul Salam, (women's rights campaigner)*

75,000

Estimated number of students studying in Qubeysi educational institutes.

9,680

The estimated number of unique hadith found in the six major hadith collections, not counting thousands of repetitions, that many of the Qubeysi students memorize.

21

*Her Eminence*

Sheikha Munira Qubeysi

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/21](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/21)

# H.E. Sheikha Munira Qubeysi

## Leader of the Qubeysi Movement

Munira Qubeysi is the head of the largest women-only Islamic movement in the world. It offers Islamic education exclusively to girls and women. Qubeysi commands around 80 schools in Damascus alone, teaching more than 75,000 students. She is one of the most significant Islamic scholars in the world; her movement focuses on learning the Qur'an and six Hadith collections by heart. Qubeysi is arguably the most influential Muslim woman in the world, albeit in great discretion.

**Female Muslim Order:** At a time when clandestine meetings of Islamic organizations are proscribed in Syria, Sheikha Qubeysi's network, the Qubeysiat, has legally been permitted to host classes and meetings in mosques since 2006—although they had been operating as a secret society for long before that time. Members of the Qubeysiat identify themselves, and ranks within the group, based on specific colors and articles of clothing—headscarves knotted at the neck, and overcoats denoting membership status. Women within the network are provided a unique role within Arab society as scholars and teachers exclusively catering to the needs of Muslim women; they provide an open forum to address religious questions and discuss religious issues.

**Milestones in Islamic Education:** Qubeysi is influential as the leader of an incredibly successful educational movement. The religious education of women had previously been neglected so the emergence of a female-specific educational initiative has become very popular, making the Qubeysiat, in

numbers, the leading Islamic movement in Syria. Qubeysi's students are also at the forefront of a significant achievement in Islamic history in regards to education—no less than 70 Qubeysiat have memorized nine canonical books of Hadith with extensive chains of narration. By training this sizeable group of female scholars, Shiekha Qubeysi has made Islamic knowledge widely accessible, and is credited for the resurgence of Islamic education in the country.

**Leading an Islamic Revival in Syria:** Qubeysi's influence in Syria is due to the fact that she has been able to develop a very large network of madrassas (religious schools) without attracting the criticism of the government, which has traditionally been dubious of large networks of Muslim organizations. The organization follows traditional Sunni practice, and follows the Shafi'i school of thought. Although member groups are found in Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon, Damascus is the center of the revivalist movement.

## The Arab Summer?

- Her spiritual movement continues, regardless of all politics.

**Country:** Nigeria

**Born:** 24 Aug 1956 (Age 56)

**Source of Influence:** Lineage, Development, Administrative

**Influence:** Central figure for 75.7 million Nigerian Muslims

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Maliki; linked to the Qadiriyyah Sufi order by lineage

**2009 Rank:** 16

**2010 Rank:** 23

**2011 Rank:** 25

**2012 Rank:** 22



“Talking is very important and is critical to finding an amicable solution to the violence.”

*Sultan M. Abubakar III*

211

The number of years since the Sokoto Empire was first established in 1809 by Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio.

52

The number of years that his father, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, led the Muslims of Nigeria, the longest ruling of the 20 Sokoto Sultans.

© Anonymous / AP

22

*Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan*  
**Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III**

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/22](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/22)

# Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III

## Sultan of Sokoto

Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III is the 20th Sultan of Sokoto. As Sultan of Sokoto, he is considered the spiritual leader of Nigeria's 74.6 million Muslims, who account for roughly 50 percent of the nation's population. Although the position of Sultan of Sokoto has become largely ceremonial, the holder is still a central figure for Nigerian Muslims.

**Lineage Back to Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio:** The Sultan of Sokoto is the spiritual leader of Nigeria's enormous Muslim community. He gains this position by lineage. Abubakar is the 20th heir to the two-century-old throne founded by his ancestor, Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio. Dan Fodio (1754–1817 CE) was a scholar, leader of the Maliki school of Islam and the Qadiri branch of Sufism, and Islamic reformer of the nineteenth century. Dan Fodio believed that Islam should have a more central role in the life of the people of West Africa and led an uprising to institute the changes he sought. His figure and his writings are a very important chapter in the history of Islam in West Africa, and Abubakar, by lineage, holds a key place in West African Islam, and particularly for the Fulani and Hausa people who followed Dan Fodio.

**An Illustrious Family:** The position currently does carry with it some weight—though largely ceremonial since British colonial rule diminished its political significance. Much of this clout is derived from the respect that was earned by Siddiq Abu Bakar Dan Usman—17th Sultan and father of Abubakar—who held the Sultanate for over fifty years. The rule of Abubakar's father from 1938 to 1988 earned the position significant social capital and popularity with ordinary Muslims.

**Administrative Power:** Abubakar holds important administrative influence in Nigerian religious life. Abubakar is the titular ruler of Sokoto in northern Nigeria and is also the head of the Nigerian National Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. Leadership of this council means that the Sultan of Sokoto remains the only figure that can legitimately claim to speak on behalf of all Nigerian Muslims. This role has become increasingly influential over the years with a rise in interreligious tensions between Nigeria's Muslim-majority north and Christian-majority south. The late Sultan Siddiq Abubakar dan Usman was widely respected for trying to ease tensions between Nigeria's Muslim and Christian communities, which occasionally spill over into sectarian violence. Abubakar also possesses military experience in conflict areas.

**Boko Haram:** The Sultan has started many initiatives to counter and reduce the influence of the Boko Haram terrorist group, including inviting an international joint Muslim-Christian Delegation to visit Nigeria.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of the Sultan.

**Country:** Senegal

**Born:** 1955 (Age 57)

**Source of Influence:** Lineage, Scholarly

**Influence:** Spiritual leader of around 100 million Tijani Muslims.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Maliki, Tijani)

**2011 Rank:** 26

**2012 Rank:** 23



“You can only go to Paradise or to Hellfire, and you have to work for Paradise in this life. This is the way, and here, is the place to work for reward in the Hereafter.”

*Sh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse*

815

The year the founder of the Tijani Tariqa passed away.

1 MIL+

The number of people who intended the inauguration of the Grand Mosque Medina-Baye, Senegal.

23

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/23](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/23)

# H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse

## Leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi Order

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse is the spiritual leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi order. The Tijaniyya is the largest Sufi order in Western Africa, and its leader commands a following of millions who see him as their guide to true Islam.

**Leader of Tijani Muslims:** Cisse became leader of the Tijaniyyah following the death of his elder brother Shaykh Hassan Cisse in 2008. He is the Imam of the Grand Mosque in Medina Baye, Senegal, which is one of Western Africa's key positions of Islamic leadership. Tijani Muslims are located throughout Western Africa and further afield. As an order, Tijanis give allegiance to their sheikh giving him significant influence as a leader.

**Education and Activities:** Shaykh Tijani Cisse (b. 1955) studied Qur'an, Arabic and classical texts with both his father, Shaykh 'Ali Cisse, and his legendary grandfather, Shaykh Ibrahim Niass. He then continued his studies at Al-Azhar University in Egypt, studying Arabic and Usul al-Din (theology). Upon completing his studies in Egypt, he traveled extensively throughout Africa, the Middle East and America. He has attended many conferences and participated in religious debates. He has also managed to edit and publish several important works, including Shaykh Ibrahim's Kashif al-Ilbas.

**Posts:** In 2001, Shaykh Tijani Cisse was appointed Senegal's General Commissioner for the Hajj. In 2006, he was again recognized by Senegalese President Aboulaye Wade and appointed a Senegalese "Special Missions Ambassador", a position he holds until the present time. He has also received Senegal's distinguished award, the Ordre de Merite (1993).

**Descendent of the Tijaniyya Founder:** The Tijaniyya is a Sufi order founded by Ahmad al Tijani Hasani, an Algerian, in the late 18th century. As the spiritual leader of the Tijaniyya, Cisse is considered to be the bearer of a spiritual inspiration called the Fayda Tijaniyya, giving him authority to carry on the teachings of Ahmad Al-Tijani Hasani. Because of this position, some Tijani Muslims refer to Cisse as the reviver of the Sunnah.

LEFT: Mosque and Maqam of Shaykh Tijani, the founder of the Tajani Tariqa, in Fez, Morocco.

BELOW: Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse meets with the elder Emir of Kano, Ado Bayero



## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Sheikh Ahmad.

**Country:** Turkey

**Born:** 29 Oct 1950 (Age 62)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** President of Turkey

**School of Thought:** Sunni

**2009 Rank:** 28

**2010 Rank:** 32

**2011 Rank:** 27

**2012 Rank:** 24



“Our aim is to show the world that a country which has a majority Muslim population can also be democratic, transparent and modern, and cooperate with the world.”

*H.E. President Abdullah Gül*

11<sup>TH</sup>

President of Turkey

9

The number of Turkish activists killed when the Mavi Marmara was raided.

24

*His Excellency*

President Abdullah Gül

[www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/24](http://www.TheMuslim500.com/2012/24)

# H.E. President Abdullah Gül

## President of the Republic of Turkey

Abdullah Gül is the 11th president of the Republic of Turkey and the first modern Turkish head-of-state from an Islamist background. Facing intense secularist opposition to his political career, Gül has maintained a focus on democratic reform. As prime minister and subsequently as foreign minister, Gül pursued a pro-active foreign policy and largely succeeded in striking a balance between Turkey's traditional Western-anchored foreign policy priorities and its new interests in the Middle East and the Muslim World.

**Education and Work:** Gül completed his basic education in his native Kayseri and then went on to study economics at Istanbul University, where he also received his doctoral degree in 1983. He then moved to Jeddah working as an economist at the Islamic Development Bank. In 1989, Abdullah Gül became an associate professor in International Economics at Istanbul University. He decided to enter politics in 1991.

**Career in Politics:** Gül was a member of both the Refah Partisi (elected to parliament in 1991 and 1995) and then the Fazilet Partisi (elected to parliament in 1999) both of which were outlawed by the Constitutional Court for their violation of the Constitution (especially the principle of secularism). He then helped found the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party), and was elected to represent Kayseri in 2002. He briefly served as Prime Minister (during the period Recep Erdogan was banned from politics), and then assumed the Foreign Minister post from 2003–2007.

**Muslim President:** When the AKP announced Gül as their candidate for President in 2007, there was a boycott by opposition parties in parliament which led to a dead-lock. Gül's open adherence to Islam (with his wife wearing a head scarf) was seen as a direct threat to Turkey's secularism. When he did become President, his swearing-in was boycotted by the Chief of the Turkish General Staff and the opposition Republican People's Party.

**Influence through Pragmatic Leadership:** Gül's political influence in Turkey and abroad derives from his ability to reconcile the demands of a predominantly religious electorate with those of the secular establishment of the Turkish Republic. Together with Erdogan, Gül has worked to expand the sphere of democratic rights in Turkey, which in turn have benefited the predominantly traditional and religious segments of Turkish society. Gül continues to play a significant role in the current efforts to find a lasting solution to Turkey's Kurdish issue. Gül was also the first Turkish politician to visit Armenia.

## The Arab Summer?

- Gül has said: 'Everyone should know that we are with the Syrian people.'
- He was the first head of state to meet with the Egyptian Supreme Council in Egypt.

**Country:** Brunei Darussalam  
**Born:** 15 July 1946 (age 66) in Brunei Town, Brunei  
**Source of Influence:** Political, Financial  
**Influence:** Leader of over 400,000 citizens of Brunei  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Shaf'i  
**2010 Rank:** 24  
**2011 Rank:** 29  
**2012 Rank:** 25



“There is no conflict between favouring Islamic and traditional values and being more open and international.”

*Hassanal Bolkiah*

600

His collection of Rolls Royce cars alone.

40<sup>BIL</sup>

His current asset evaluation.

25

*His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah*  
*Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah*

# H.M. Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah

## Sultan of Brunei

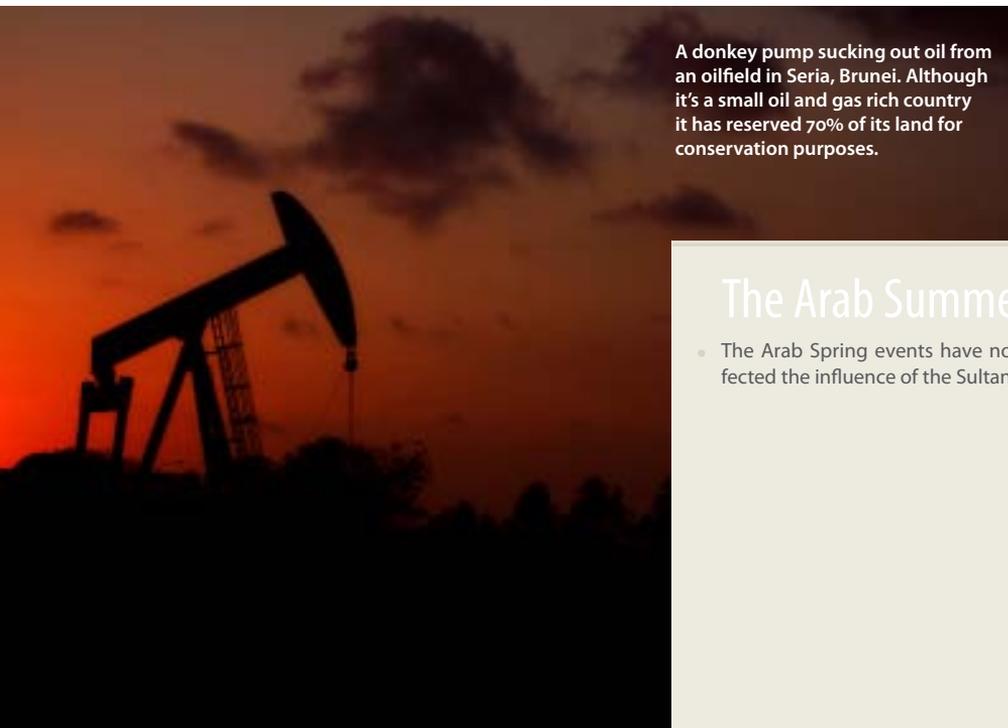
His Majesty Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah is one of the richest men in the world. He is the 29th Sultan of one of the oldest dynasties in existence today. Brunei is an oil and gas rich state on the north coast of the island of Borneo in Southeast Asia, with a Muslim population of approximately 211,000.

**House of Bolkiah:** His Majesty Sultan Bolkiah descends from the House of Bolkiah, which traces back to Sultan Bolkiah, the fifth Sultan of Brunei (who ruled from 1485–1524 CE). The House of Bolkiah is the longest reigning Sunni Muslim Royal House in Brunei.

**Administrative Influence:** Sultan Bolkiah has been lauded for attempts at slowly democratizing the country's governance, while at the same time consolidating royal authority. Beginning in the early nineties Sultan Bolkiah began trying to strengthen the role of Islam through the notion of Melayu Islam Beraja (or Malay Islamic Monarchy). The Sultan is also an important donor to the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

**Development:** The citizens of Brunei enjoy a very high standard of living with life expectancy at 74 and 77 for men and women respectively. Education and health care of a high standard are available to all citizens.

**Personal Wealth:** The Sultan is one of the world's wealthiest people. His official residence has over 1,800 rooms, and he maintains a car collection in the thousands. He is known for holding lavish ceremonies.



A donkey pump sucking out oil from an oilfield in Seria, Brunei. Although it's a small oil and gas rich country it has reserved 70% of its land for conservation purposes.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of the Sultan.



**Mufti Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan Qadiri Al-Azhari**  
Barelwi Leader and Spiritual Guide

**Country:** India

**Born:** 23 Nov 1946 (age 66)

**Influence:** Administrative, Scholarly. Leader of 2 million barkatiya Barelwis

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Barelwi Sufi)

**Rank:**

2010: 26

2011: 28

2012: 26



**Sheikh Dr Muhammad Said Al-Bouti**  
Leading Islamic Scholar in Syria

**Country:** Syria

**Born:** 1929 (Age 83)

**Influence:** Scholarly. Leading scholar for 20 million Syrian Muslims

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Shaf'i)

**Rank:**

2009: 23

2010: 17

2011: 20

2012: 27

Mufti Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan is the leader of the Indian Barelwis and considered by his followers as the Grand Mufti of India. He is the great-grandson of Ahmed Raza Khan (d. 1921), who founded the Barelwi movement in South Asia.

**Education & Scholarly Lineage:** Mufti Akhtar Raza received his basic education at Darul Uloom Manzar-e-Islam in Bareilly, India. He then went to Al-Azhar University to study tafsir and hadith (1963–1966). Upon graduation, he was awarded the Jamia Azhar Award by Colonel Jamal Abdul Nasir. He then returned to India and has written numerous books, educated hundreds of scholars, and overseen the development of many educational institutes. He also serves as a spiritual guide, having been given permission by his predecessor Mufti Mustafa Raza Khan to lead the Qadriya, Barakaatiyah, and Nooriyah Sufi orders in India. He was also appointed to the position of Muslim Chief Justice of India in 2006.

**Dynamic Mufti:** Mufti Akhtar Raza is esteemed for his extensive collection of English-language rulings, the Azharul Fatawa. He became involved in issuing Islamic rulings from the age of 17 and is noted for having issued over 5,000 rulings.

Sheikh Al-Bouti is the leading Islamic scholar in Syria. He is a retired Dean and current professor at the College of Islamic Law at Damascus University. Al-Bouti preaches very often and is highly respected by many of the leading scholars in the Muslim world.

**Traditionalist Scholar:** Al-Bouti is the scholar's scholar, and the bulk of his influence comes from his position of respect and authority among the leading thinkers in Islam today. Al-Bouti is a keen supporter of madhabs (traditional Islamic schools of law), and is one of the leading critics of the significant movement to abandon these schools. He also is vocal about how a poor understanding of the term jihad has led to its abuse by both Muslims and non-Muslims. His view is that those who are unaware of the basis of fiqh have manipulated the idea of jihad for their own benefit, underlining that jihad must be conducted, according to Islamic fiqh (jurisprudence).

**Prolific Writer:** Sheikh Al-Bouti has made an impact on the Muslim World, in particular through his scholarly outreach. He writes for news publications and journals, and has developed a reputation for his ability to address and respond to queries regarding Islamic jurisprudence, and personal issues.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Mufti Raza Khan.

## The Arab Summer?

- Al-Bouti denounced the protests and called on protesters not to be driven by anonymous calls to incite sedition and chaos in Syria.
- Anti-government scholars have criticized him for not overtly taking their side.
- He has resolutely refused to leave Syria.



## Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah Secretary General of Hezbollah

**Country:** Lebanon  
**Born:** 31 Aug 1960 (Age 52)  
**Influence:** Political, Development. Political leader of 1–2 million Lebanese Shi'a and supporters of his resistance to Israel  
**School of Thought:** Revolutionary Shi'ism

**Rank:**  
 2009: 17  
 2010: 18  
 2011: 23  
 2012: 28

Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah is serving his sixth term as the current and third Secretary General of Hezbollah (the Party of God). Hezbollah is a Twelver Shi'a Islamic political party and paramilitary organization based in Lebanon.

**Military Power:** Hezbollah remains a de facto security force in southern Lebanon, and its military presence is felt throughout the country, with a force of around 300,000 fighters. The military successes Nasrallah had in the late nineties are seen as the main factor for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. Moreover, the staunch defense put up by Hezbollah forces against Israel in July 2006 earned Nasrallah many more supporters, however many of these are being lost because of his support for the Syrian government.

**Lebanon's leading Twelver Shi'a:** Nasrallah was educated at the Hawza Shi'a seminary in Najaf in Iraq, where he met Abbas Musawi, his predecessor as leader of Hezbollah. Nasrallah took over leadership in 1992 and has popularized the party among both the Muslim and non-Muslim population. Hezbollah has gained popular appeal by providing social services, health care and also running Al Manar—an influential TV station.

### The Arab Summer?

- Nasrallah has expressed support for the Arab uprisings, particularly in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen; yet he supports the Syrian regime, betraying a sectarian bias.
- Tensions along sectarian lines are now brewing in Lebanon.



## H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah Deputy-Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars

**Country:** Mauritania  
**Born:** 1935 (age 77) in Maruitania  
**Influence:** Scholarly. Significant influence as a leading contemporary scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Maliki)

**Rank:**  
 2009: 30  
 2010: 30  
 2011: 31  
 2012: 29

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah's influence is derived from his scholarship and preaching. Uniquely, all of the different sects and schools of Muslims respect him as a scholar. A testament to this is the notable fact that whilst he is not a Salafi, the Saudi government promulgates his fatwas as authoritative. He is an instructor at King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah and is the deputy head of the Union of Muslim Scholars, under Yusuf al Qaradawi.

**Diplomat:** As a member of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy or Al Majma' al Fiqhi of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Sheikh Bin Bayyah is at the forefront of the legal arm of a dynamic organization with a permanent delegation to the United Nations.

**Author:** Having written numerous texts, Sheikh Bin Bayyah's scholarly explorations have gone global through speaking engagements that draw crowds of tens of thousands. He has spoken at length about the endurance of the Islamic legal tradition and also written extensively on rulings for Muslims living as minorities in foreign lands, or *fiqh al aqaliyyaat*.

### The Arab Summer?

- He, and a group of Muslim scholars from all over the world, condemned the actions of the Syrian regime; particularly the attack on Muslim scholars, mosques and the haphazard killing of the innocent.



**H.E. Mohammad bin  
Mohammad Al-Mansour**  
Imam of the Zaidi Sect  
of Shi'a Muslims

**Country:** Yemen

**Born:** 1917 (age 95) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Influence:** Lineage, Scholarly, Imam of 10 million Zaidi Shi'a in Yemen and Saudi Arabia

**School of Thought:** Traditional Zaidi (Fiver) Shia

**Rank:**  
2009: 26  
2010: 29  
2011: 30  
2012: 30



**H.R.H. Shah Karim  
Al-Hussayni**  
The Aga Khan IV, 49th  
Imam of Ismaili Muslims

**Country:** France

**Born:** 13 Dec 1936 (Age 76)

**Influence:** Lineage, Administrative. Leader of 5–15 million Nizari Ismailis

**School of Thought:** Modernist Shi'a, Ismaili, Nizari

**Rank:**  
2009: 20  
2010: 20  
2011: 22  
2012: 31

His Eminence Mohammad bin Mohammad al Mansour is the Imam of the Zaidi branch of the Shi'a sect of Muslims, one of the three main branches of Shi'a Islam. With approximately ten million followers, Zaidis constitute almost half the entire population of Yemen, and around 3 percent in Saudi Arabia.

**Lineage in the Imamate:** Zaidi Muslims are a Shi'a sect named after the followers of Zaid bin Ali, grandson of al Hussein (grandson of the Prophet Muhammad). The sect was formed by the followers of Zaid bin Ali who led an unsuccessful revolt against the Umayyad Caliph Hisham ibn Abd Al Malik in 740 CE.

**Current Social Influence:** In the past decade a Zaidi movement known as the Shabab al Muminen led by Hussein Al Houthi has been gaining prominence in the northwest of Yemen. This has stoked some sectarian rivalry in Yemen, between the Zaidi and radical anti-Shi'a groups who are fearful of the resurgence of Zaidi rule in Yemen. Al-Mansour maintained his quietist approach and enjoys much respect in Yemeni society. Al-Mansour was influential in stemming the escalation of conflict in 2005.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Imam Al Mansour.

Shah Karim, also known simply as the Aga Khan (Imamate: 1957-present), is the leader of the Shi'a sect known as the Nizari Ismailis. The Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam, with lineage descending back to Ali, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad. He is only the fourth Aga Khan, a hereditary title bestowed upon the Imam by the Shah of Persia in the mid-nineteenth century.

**Hereditary Leader of Ismailis:** The Aga Khan derives his position of authority from his lineage. At the age of 21 the Aga Khan bypassed his father and uncle to become the 49th Imam, a choice that his grandfather made because he felt the community needed a leader 'who has been brought up and developed during recent years and in the midst of the new age, and who brings a new outlook on life to his office.'

**Unparalleled Philanthropist:** The Aga Khan set up the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which is a collection of development and humanitarian agencies working in areas of poverty. The network is widely known for its architectural and cultural work, including projects that revitalize historic cities (e.g. the Old City of Aleppo and the Al-Azhar Park in Cairo). The Aga Khan's foundation maintains a strong and enduring presence in developing countries—building health care capacity, promoting economic development in rural areas and helping improve educational opportunities.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of the Aga Khan.



**H.E. Justice Sheikh  
Muhammad  
Taqi Usmani**  
Leading Scholar of  
Islamic Jurisprudence

**Country:** Pakistan  
**Born:** 1943 (age 69) in Deoband, India  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage. Leading scholar for the Deobandis and in Islamic finance.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

**Rank:**  
2009: 27  
2010: 31  
2011: 32  
2012: 32

Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani is a leading scholar of Islamic jurisprudence. He is considered to be the intellectual leader of the Deobandi movement. He specialises in financial matters and presented a paper in January 2010's World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, entitled, "Post-Crisis Reforms: Some Points to Ponder".

**Leading Islamic Finance Scholar:** Usmani's chief influence comes from his position as a global authority on the issue of Islamic finance. He has served on the boards, and as chairman, of over a dozen Islamic banks and financial institutions, and currently leads the International Shariah Council for the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) in Bahrain. He is also deputy chairman of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, one of the highest legal bodies in the Muslim world.

**Deobandi Figurehead:** Usmani is very important as a figurehead in the Deobandi movement—one of the most successful of the Islamic revivalist initiatives of the past century. Usmani was born in Deoband, India, to Mufti Muhammad Shafi (the former Grand Mufti of Pakistan) who founded the Darul 'Uloom Deoband, a leading center of Islamic education in Pakistan.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of the Mufti Usmani.



**Sheikh Mohammed  
Ali Al-Sabouni**  
Scholar of Tafsir

**Country:** Syria  
**Born:** 1 Jan 1930 (age 82)  
**Influence:** Scholarly. Significant scholarly influence as the leading contemporary authority on Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*)  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi)

**Rank:**  
2009: 29  
2010: 34  
2011: 35  
2012: 33

An internationally respected Islamic scholar of tafsir, or Qur'anic exegesis, Sheikh Mohammed Ali Al-Sabouni is widely acclaimed for his short commentaries of the Qur'an.

**Popular Commentaries:** Al-Sabouni is influential because of his easy-to-read, simplified commentaries of the Holy Qur'an. They are now thought of as some of the most popular short commentaries in history after those of Jalalayn, Baydawi, Ibn Kathir and Ibn Juzayy. One of Al-Sabouni's most influential commentaries is the Tafsir Ayat Al Ahkam, an exploration of the Qur'anic verses that pertain to legal rulings.

**Traditional Authority:** The Institute of Scientific Research and Revival of Islamic Heritage at the Umm Al Qura University in Mecca, Saudi Arabia commissioned Al-Sabouni to investigate the ancient tafsir manuscript of Abu Jaafar Al-Nahas (d. 949 CE/338AH). Al-Sabouni's landmark achievement of verifying the only surviving manuscript of the text has come to fruition as a six volume work published by the university.

## The Arab Summer?

- He has called upon all protesters to keep a firm stand and fight against tyranny.
- He issued a fatwa saying that it is forbidden for soldiers in the Syrian army to fight their brethren.



## Dr Amr Khaled

### Preacher and Social Activist

**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 5 Sept 1967 (Age 45)  
**Influence:** Media, Youth. Popular multimedia preacher with highly visited website and social network following.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**Rank:**  
 2009: 14  
 2010: 15  
 2011: 21  
 2012: 34

Amr Khaled has been a televangelist to the Islamic world since 1998. He communicates through his TV shows and web campaigns using Islamic ethics as a way to inspire, foster community development, tolerance and inter-cultural relations.

**Popular Media Figure:** Part of Khaled's influence derives from the fact that he appeals to the common person. He holds a degree in accounting, and has no formal religious education; wears suits and ties, and has a clean-shaven face except for a trimmed moustache—everything you do not expect from a Muslim preacher. He appears on many TV shows. His website is translated from Arabic into nearly twenty languages and it rivals Oprah Winfrey's in terms of traffic. His videos have racked up 33 million views on YouTube, and he boasts 5 million likes on Facebook.

**Community Development:** Khaled's goal is to encourage community development in the Muslim world with religious faith as the guiding inspiration. One program he has launched to realize this objective of community development is Life Makers, which has a stated goal of producing a renaissance for the Arab and Muslim Worlds.

## The Arab Summer?

- Amr Khaled was with the protestors in Tahrir Square and supported the revolutions that took place in the Arab World.
- His subsequent founding of a political party has caused him to lose much of his wide-appeal, and so his influence has declined sharply.



## H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas

### President of the Palestinian National Authority

**Country:** Palestine  
**Born:** 26 March 1935 (age 77) in Galilee, Israel.

**Influence:** Political. One of the founders of Fatah, and leading peace negotiator in the Palestine-Israel conflict.

**School of Thought:** Sunni

**Rank:**  
 2009: Top 500  
 2010: Top 500  
 2011: 36  
 2012: 35

Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, is the President of the Palestinian National Authority a co-founder of Fatah, and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization. His standing, both nationally and internationally, improved dramatically after he submitted Palestine's bid for statehood at the UNGA in September 2011.

**Politics:** President Abbas is one of the few surviving founder members of Fatah - the main political grouping within the PLO. He has always been committed to pursuing an independent Palestinian state through negotiations and was one of the principal architects of the Oslo peace process.

**Problems & Statehood Bid:** Abbas has faced many internal and external problems but has managed to come through largely unscathed. After seeing that years of peace negotiations were leading to nothing but the relentless growth of illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, President Abbas chose to look for an alternative strategy: submitting a statehood bid at the UN.

## The Arab Summer?

- Has said: 'We Palestinians have always been at the heart of the movement of Arab peoples aspiring to freedom ... We have always been committed to democratic traditions, respected pluralism and the freedom of opinion and expression, and this has long been a source of pride for us and a source of inspiration for our brothers from other Arab nations.'



**Habib Umar bin Hafiz**  
Director of Dar Al  
Mustafa, Tarim, Yemen

**Country:** Yemen

**Born:** 1962 (Age 50)

**Influence:** Lineage, Scholarly. Runs one of the foremost centers for Islamic education in the world.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Shafi'i, Ash'ari, Ba'Alawi Sufi)

**Rank:**

2009: 36

2010: 37

2011: 37

2012: 36

Habib Umar bin Hafiz is well known for his Prophetic lineage and status as one of the most influential Sufi scholars alive today. His influence through scholarship and preaching is vast in Indonesia and East Africa. He is also incredibly influential through his leadership of the Ba'Alawi movement. He has increased his touring of western countries in the past few years in response to his growing following.

**Cultivation of Scholarship:** Habib Umar founded and runs Dar al Mustafa, a center for traditional Islamic scholarship that currently hosts an array of international students, in Tarim, Yemen. He has joined the ranks of the world's leading Muslim academics and scholars as a signatory of 'A Common Word Between Us and You', a document that builds bridges between Muslims and Christians.

**Da'wa & Humanitarian Efforts:** Habib Umar is noted for his da'wa efforts, with significant visits to the USA and Europe over recent years. In July 2008, he partnered with Muslim Aid Australia as founder of Yemen-based NGO Al Rafah Charitable Society to address issues of poverty and hunger and lack of sufficient health care that affect areas of Tarim.

## The Arab Summer?

- Has said: 'Scholars must guide all on the path of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and Muslim blood should not be shed ... It is forbidden, whether you are a ruler or a citizen, to hurt or harm others, and to allow the killing, looting, and dishonouring of Muslims in any way.'



**H.M. Queen  
Rania Al-Abdullah**  
Queen of the Hashemite  
Kingdom of Jordan

**Country:** Jordan

**Born:** 31 Aug 1970 (age 42) in Kuwait City, Kuwait

**Influence:** Philanthropy, Social, Media, Political. Queen of Jordan with millions of followers and subscribers on social media sites.

**School of Thought:** Modernist Sunni

**Rank:**

2009: Top 500

2010: 32

2011: 34

2012: 37

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah is the wife of H.M. King Abdullah II, but is also in her own right an educational activist with global appeal. Through sheer hard work, she has developed the biggest virtual following of any Muslim in the world, and she defends and humanizes Islam and Arab causes in- and to-the West as effectively as any Muslim scholar in the world.

**Educational Ambassador:** HM Queen Rania is the initiator and key leader behind the launch of educational initiatives such as the Jordanian Madrasati, 'My School', a five-year project for the development of Jordan's public school system. She is also the co-founder and global chair of the '1 Goal: Education For All' campaign which was based around the 2010 FIFA World Cup and calls for the complete primary schooling of all boys and girls in the world by 2015.

**Intercultural Dialogue:** Queen Rania has an amazingly popular YouTube channel, with over 6.5 million views of her videos, and website ([www.QueenRania.jo](http://www.QueenRania.jo)). In April 2010, Queen Rania launched her children's book 'The Sandwich Swap' (which made the New York Times best-seller list) through the United Nations Bookshop in an initiative to promote cross-cultural understanding among youth.

## The Arab Summer?

- Despite some male chauvinistic criticism inside Jordan during the Arab Spring, Queen Rania remains by far the most popular person – male or female – on social media in the Arab World.



**H.H. Sheikha Moza  
Bint Nasser Al-Missned**  
Chairperson of the  
Qatar Foundation

**Country:** Qatar

**Born:** 8 Aug 1959 (age 53) in Al Khor, Qatar

**Influence:** Philanthropy, Social, Media, Political. Queen of Qatar, heads Qatar Foundation and other organizations.

**School of Thought:** Sunni, Moderate Salafi

**Rank:**  
2009: Top 500  
2010: Top 500  
2011: 38  
2012: 38

Her Highness Sheikha Moza is married to the Emir of Qatar. She plays a very active role in promoting a wide range of issues at home, in the Gulf region and internationally.

**Education Initiatives & Leadership:** Sheikha Moza is the Chairperson of the non-profit Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. The Foundation has brought some of the leading US university programs to Qatar. It also promotes international research, and provides scholarships around the world. Sheikha Moza serves as the President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and is Vice Chairperson of both the Supreme Education Council, and the Supreme Health Council.

**International Work & Recognition:** In 2003, UNESCO appointed Sheikha Moza as the Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, and in 2005 she was selected to be a member of the high level group of the UN Alliance of Civilizations. Along with her UNESCO work, she actively promotes and protects the right to education in conflict-hit areas of the world; particularly Gaza, Iraq and Afghanistan. Sheikha Moza was listed as one of the “100 most powerful women in the world” by Forbes Magazine in 2007. In addition, she was named as one of the “25 Most Influential Business Leaders in the Middle East” by The Times of London.

## The Arab Summer?

- Qatar's influence in the Arab Spring also boosted its first lady, Sheikha Mozah.



**Professor Dr M Din  
Syamsuddin**  
Chairman of Muham-  
madiyah, Indonesia

**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 31 Aug 1958 (age 54)

**Influence:** Scholarly, Administrative, Development. Over 35 million members in the Muhammadiyah organization, including thousands of umbrella institutes.

**School of Thought:** Modernist Sunni

**Rank:**  
2009: 35  
2010: 39  
2011: 40  
2012: 39

As chairman of the largest modernist Islamic organization in Indonesia, as well as a leader of the Indonesian Ulema Council, Din Syamsuddin influences the Muslim World on various fronts. He was re-elected as the chairman for another five years in July 2010.

**Social Welfare:** Established in 1912, the Muhammadiyah is one of the oldest and largest Muslim organizations in the world. Syamsuddin is involved with the educational, health, and social welfare efforts of the organization which includes 14,000 schools, 172 universities and institutes of higher learning, 485 clinics and hospitals, 600 orphanages, 300 microfinance institutes and numerous other projects across Indonesia.

**Interfaith Dialogue Leadership:** Syamsuddin is also very active in interfaith and intercultural dialogue, serving as President of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP), Co-President of WCRP, and Chairman of the World Peace Forum.

**Conflict Resolution:** The Muhammadiyah is active in conflict resolution such as in the South of Thailand and Mindanao. It is a member of the International Contact Group (ICG) for peace talks between the government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Dr Din Syamsuddin.



**Maulana Mahmood Madani**  
 Leader and Executive Member of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, India

**Country:** India  
**Born:** 3 March 1964 (age 48)  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Political, Administrative. 10 million members of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

**Rank:**  
 2009: 36  
 2010: 40  
 2011: 41  
 2012: 40

Maulana Mahmood Madani, a leading Islamic scholar and politician in India, has gained influence for his forthright condemnations of terrorism and unfaltering support of the Indian Muslim community.

**Religio-Political Heavyweight:** Madani has served as Secretary General of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, or Organization of Indian Scholars—one of the most prominent Islamic organizations in India. He has been outspoken in his opposition to the misuse of the term jihad as a tool of terrorism in India. Following fatal bomb blasts in 2008, he and others of the Darul Uloom Deoband institution hosted events condemning terrorism as inherently un-Islamic.

**Defender of the Faith:** As a respected political leader and Islamic scholar of India, Madani represented the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and the esteemed community of scholars from Deoband when he addressed the Pakistani government, and Pakistani High Commissioner Shahid Malik in particular, in an open letter regarding the commissioner's remarks in December 2008 at the UN Security Council about terrorism stemming from 'mullas in Deoband'. Maulana Madani is also a strong opponent of government interference in the madrasa system.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Maulana Madani.



**Habib Ali Zain Al-Abideen Al-Jifri**  
 Director General of the Tabah Foundation, UAE

**Country:** UAE  
**Born:** 16 April 1971 (age 41)  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage, Philanthropy. reaches millions with his global teaching endeavors. **School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Shafi'i, Ash'ari, Ba 'Alawi Sufi)

**Rank:**  
 2009: 37  
 2010: 41  
 2011: 42  
 2012: 41

Tracing back his lineage to the family of 'Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam and cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, Habib Ali Zain al-Abideen Al-Jifri is a leading Islamic scholar and prominent speaker in the Muslim World.

**Sufi Guide:** As a Ba 'Alawi Sufi, Al-Jifri is part of a tradition that has been based in Yemen for approximately 800 years and traces back to the Prophet Muhammad. He is influential as a Sufi spiritual guide in the Muslim World; and Dar al Mustafa is an influential Islamic educational institution in Yemen.

**Educator:** Habib Ali founded the privately-funded philanthropic Tabah Foundation for Islamic Studies and Research in Abu Dhabi, a young non-profit institution that aspires to become a formidable source of reputable work in Islamic research and thought. He is also a member of the board of Dar al-Mustafa in Yemen, member of the Royal Aal al Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan, and affiliated with various other international Islamic organizations.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Habib Ali.



**Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson**  
Teacher and Co-founder  
of Zaytuna College, USA

**Country:** USA

**Born:** 1960 (age 52)

**Influence:** Scholarly. Leading Islamic authority in a country with 2.6 million Muslims

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Maliki, Asha'ri)

**Rank:**

2009: 38

2010: 42

2011: 43

2012: 42



**H.E. Professor Dr Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu**  
Secretary General  
of the OIC

**Country:** Turkey

**Born:** 26 Dec 1943 (age 69)

**Influence:** Administrative, Political. Leader of an organization comprised of 57 Muslim-majority states.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**Rank:**

2009: 40

2010: 44

2011: 45

2012: 43

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson is the Western World's most influential Islamic figure. He is seen as one of the foremost authorities on Islam outside of the Muslim World. He is a co-founder of Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, the first Muslim liberal arts college in the USA.

**Islamic Scholar:** Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson converted to Islam in 1977 when he was only 17 and spent many years studying Arabic, Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy with some of the Muslim world's most prominent and well-respected teachers. His popularity, and accordingly his influence, stem from his application of Islamic knowledge being rooted in the lived experience of modern, western society.

**Speaker and Educator:** Sheikh Hamza is a much sought after speaker. He has given thousands of lectures to public audiences and is interviewed regularly by the media. He spreads traditional Sunni orthodoxy in the West through his popular speeches and his teaching at short intense study programmes such as Deen Intensive, Rihla and RIS. He maintains a blog on sandala.org.

## The Arab Summer?

- Sheikh Hamza argues that history has proven revolts and overthrown regimes do not mean an end to problems. He urges that change should start at home and not from replacing regimes as uprisings start from a self inclined towards evil. Furthermore, he expressed his admiration of constitutional monarchies since they are not affected by corruption, for the king is not in need of anything. He used the King of Morocco as an example.

Ihsanoglu is Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation—the largest intergovernmental Muslim organization in the world, and the second largest public organization after the United Nations.

**Voice for the Muslim World:** The OIC often has more influence over certain issues than other organizations do, and can have a key role to play in world events—being more inclusive than the Arab League and also able to tackle specific injustices that the United Nations Security Council cannot.

**Reviving the OIC:** Under Ihsanoglu's leadership the organization's remit has widened from its previously staple issues of Islamic solidarity towards more immediate humanitarian concerns of economic and social deprivation around the Muslim World, making the organization more akin to the United Nations in its work. In January 2010, Ihsanoglu called for the creation of a Peace & Security Council as well as an Islamic Court of Justice to adjudicate between member states of the OIC.

## The Arab Summer?

- He has said: 'How could the Middle East remain the same when everywhere else the world is changing? But change is going to differ from one country to another. It will take a long time and it will be painful. That is why I never called this process an 'Arab Spring' – because spring is just one season, and we will see the summer and winter. It will take a long time for the new regimes to take shape. But this [region] is definitely going to be [moving] in the direction of democracy.'



**Professor Dr Seyyed  
Hossein Nasr**  
Philosopher &  
University Professor

**Country:** USA

**Born:** 7 April 1933 (age 79)

**Influence:** Scholarly. Written major books and given countless lectures internationally

**School of Thought:** Traditional Shi'a

**Rank:**

2009: 47

2010: 48

2011: 47

2012: 44

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is an Islamic Studies professor at George Washington University. He remains one of the most influential Muslim scholars in the world for his work on Islamic tradition and philosophy. He is the only Muslim to be included in the Library of Living Philosophers. He has written over 50 books and over 500 articles.

**Reviver of Tradition:** Nasr's work has covered the most important areas of contemporary Muslim thought from classical Islamic philosophy, Islamic science, Sufism, and critique of modernity to interfaith relations, Islam–West relations, and the environmental crisis. Nasr is the first Muslim scholar ever to be invited to give the prestigious Gifford Lectures, which were later published as *Knowledge and the Sacred*.

**Islamic Environmentalism:** Nasr's work has been ahead of its time in predicting the disastrous consequences of the environmental crisis. Books such as *The Encounter of Man and Nature: the Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (1968), and *Religion and the Order of Nature* (1996), narrate the rise of a secular, modern conception of nature as inert matter to be conquered by modern technology, and attempt to revive a sacred notion of nature.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Dr Nasr.



**Sheikh Mehmet Nazim  
Adil Al-Qubrusi**  
Al-Haqqani  
Leader of Naqshbandi-  
Haqqani Sufi Order

**Country:** Cyprus

**Born:** 25 April 1922 (age 90)

**Influence:** Lineage, Scholarly. Leader of sizeable worldwide Sufi order

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Naqshbandi Sufi)

**Rank:**

2009: 49

2010: 49

2011: 48

2012: 45

As Sufi master and leader of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order, Sheikh Mehmet Nazim Adil al Qubrusi is influential as one of the highest ranking Sufi spiritual guides and traces his lineage back to the prominent Sufis 'Abd al Qadir al Jilani (1077–1166 CE) and Jalal al Din Rumi (d. 1273 CE).

**Stalwart Missionary:** Al Haqqani's travels have taken him to meet with students and followers of the Naqshbandi Sufi order across the globe. This order, which traces its spiritual lineage back to Prophet Muhammad's companion Abu Bakr, is one that practices silent remembrance of God. Al Haqqani has a great deal of influence with Muslims around the globe, having spent time with the Muslim communities in the former Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Syria, and Uzbekistan—where the tomb of the founder of the Naqshbandi Sufi order is located.

**Spiritual Guide:** Al Haqqani has ministered to the Sultan of Brunei, Sir Sultan Hamengkubuwono X of Indonesia, and members of the Malaysian Royal Family. He is credited for the growing popularity of the Naqshbandi order, which reaches millions through his followers. In 2010 an online portal authorized by Shaykh Nazim launched his official online journal titled *Saltanat.org* which contains articles written by him and broadcasts his lectures via livestream.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Sheikh Nazim.



**H.E. Sheikh Professor  
Dr Mustafa Cerić**  
Former Grand Mufti of  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Country:** Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Born:** 1952 (age 60)  
**Influence:** Administrative, Scholarly.  
Grand Mufti of 1.6 million Bosnian  
Muslims  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**Rank:**  
2009: 39  
2010: 43  
2011: 44  
2012: 46

Mustafa Cerić is a guiding light for Islam in Europe and the leading Islamic authority there; he became Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1993. Cerić is outspoken on interfaith initiatives in the Muslim World and is considered one of the most influential Muslim leaders of current times.

**Advocate of Cross-Cultural Engagement:** In 2006, Cerić issued the 'Declaration of European Muslims' to the European Union stating that European Muslims are dedicated to the common values of law, tolerance, democracy and human rights, the value of life, faith, freedom, property, and dignity. In May 2009 Cerić disregarded warnings of possible violent protest by visiting Serbia and spoke at a sermon in the town of Tutin about the need for Bosnian and Serbian Muslims to unite as one entity.

**Peace Activist:** Cerić joined the International Religious Advisory Council of the TB Faith Foundation in 2008, committing himself to its mission of promoting respect and religious pluralism through discussions on social injustice.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Dr Cerić.



**H.E. Dr Abd al Aziz  
bin 'Uthman Altwajjiri**  
Secretary General of ISESCO

**Country:** Saudi Arabia  
**Born:** 3 April 1950 (age 62)  
**Influence:** Development, Administrative. Head of largest Islamic educational organization  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**Rank:**  
2009: 50  
2010: 50  
2011: 49  
2012: 47

His Excellency Dr Abd al Aziz bin 'Uthman Altwajjiri has exercised his influence by promoting educational development for OIC member states.

**Educational Influence:** Through his leadership with ISESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), Altwajjiri has engaged in work with Muslim institutions in Europe, Asia and Latin America. He has established the Supreme Council of Education, Science and Culture, an alliance designated for work outside of the Islamic World.

**Voice of Diplomacy:** Altwajjiri, as a spokesman for ISESCO, has categorically condemned acts of terrorism from the bomb blasts on a mosque in South East Iran to suicide attacks in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province in 2009. On US President Obama's inaugural visit to the Middle East, Altwajjiri expressed his willingness to develop positive relations between the US and the Muslim World toward tolerance and the cause of justice.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Dr Altwajjiri.



## Khaled Mashaal

### Leader of Hamas

**Country:** Palestine  
**Born:** 1956 (age 56)  
**Influence:** Political. Leader of approximately 1,000 members in military wing of Hamas  
**School of Thought:** Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

**Rank:**  
 2009: 37  
 2010: 38  
 2011: 39  
 2012: 48

Khaled Mashaal became the leader of Hamas after the assassination of Sheikh Ahmad Yassen in 2004, Mashaal is the head of Hamas's Syrian political bureau and is the international representative for the Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation.

**Fighter for Social Justice:** Since becoming head of Hamas, Mashaal has seen the organization through multiple attempts at a roadmap to peace and a major Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip.

**Pioneering Leader:** Mashaal has been recognized for his persistence with Hamas's efforts—at present leading in exile from Qatar. His determination is combined with a unique effort at diplomacy. Mashaal has shown a willingness to negotiate with Israel to return to the 1967 borders and grant Palestinians a right of return, while importantly implying the necessary existence of the State of Israel, despite Hamas's historic denial of that possibility. Mashaal has been one of the most direct, and candid leaders in dialogue and confrontation with Israel and this has garnered international recognition.

## The Arab Summer?

- Hamas political leader Khaled Mashaal praised the uprisings and expressed the hope that they would pave the way for a firmer stance towards Israel.



## Prof. Dr Aref Ali Nayed

### Scholar & Former Libyan Ambassador to the UAE

**Country:** Libya  
**Born:** 1962 (age 50) in Libya  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Political, Scholarly. Interfaith scholar and influential figure in the new Libyan government  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

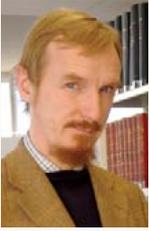
**Rank:**  
 2009: Top 500  
 2011: 50  
 2012: 49

Nayed was the first post-Gaddafi Libyan Ambassador to the UAE for Libya's National Transitional Council. He led the Tripoli Stabilisation Team. Prior to the Libyan revolution he worked as an important scholar in the field of Muslim-Christian relations, and was the founder and director of Kalam Research & Media (KRM).

**Religious Scholar:** Nayed is a former professor at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Rome), a former professor at the International Institute for Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC, Malaysia) and a senior advisor to the Cambridge Interfaith Program and the Faculty of Divinity in Cambridge, UK. Prior to the Libyan revolution he lectured on Islamic Theology, Logic, and Spirituality at the restored Uthman Pasha Madrasa in Tripoli, Libya, and supervised Graduate Students at the Islamic Call College there. He is also a member of the Board of Advisors of the Templeton Foundation.

## The Arab Summer?

- He remains an important consensus figure in Libya during frequent governmental change, having held various governmental positions.
- He took part in demonstrations in Tripoli in the early days of the revolution.
- Established the Network of Free Ulema.
- He bridges between the West and the Islamic World and between liberals and Islamists in Libya.



**Prof. Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad)**

**Scholar**

**Country:** UK

**Born:** 1960 (age 52)

**Influence:** Scholarly. Cambridge Professor.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**Rank:**

2009: Top 500 (HM)

2010: Top 500 (HM)

2011: Top 500 (HM)

2012: 50

Winter teaches theology at Cambridge University and is the director of Studies in Theology at Wolfson College in Cambridge. He is also the Dean of the Cambridge Muslim College. He is a role model for British and European Muslims, and indeed Muslims around the world.

**Scholar:** Winter graduated with a double-first in Arabic from Cambridge University and then went on to study at Al-Azhar. He then studied under the direct tutelage of Islamic scholars, including the famous Habib Ahmad Mashhur al-Haddad. Winter conveys his knowledge to the English speaking world through his translations, articles and lectures. He has become a powerful voice of traditional Islam to the English-speaking world. He is also the director of the Sunnah project, which has published the foremost scholarly Arabic editions of the major Sunni Hadith collections.

**Pioneer:** Winter was the force behind establishing the Cambridge Muslim College – a pioneering institute, which aims to produce Islamic leaders who will help meet the many challenges facing Britain today. He is also the Chair of the Muslim Education Trust, which is overseeing the building of the new Cambridge Mosque. With its emphasis on sustainability and almost total reliance on green energy, the new Cambridge Mosque will be Europe's first eco-mosque.

## The Arab Summer?

- The Arab Spring events have not significantly affected the influence of Prof. Winter.

✧ Honorable ✧  
MENTIONS



**H.H. Amir Sheikh  
Mohammed bin  
Rashid Al-Maktoum**

**Political**

**Country:** UAE

**Born:** 12 July 1949 (age 63)  
in Dubai, Trucial State

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum is the Ruler of Dubai as well as the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates. After taking a heavy hit during the financial crisis, Dubai is well back on its way to recovery, and still stands out as a leader of vision and practice in the region. Al-Maktoum is a well-respected politician in the Middle East. He has launched multiple charity initiatives from Dubai, such as ‘Dubai Cares’ which has donated over \$910 million to youth education initiatives in impoverished countries since its inception in 2007.



**Dr Muhammad  
Tahir Al-Qadri**

**Scholarly**

**Country:** Pakistan

**Born:** 19 Feb 1951 (age 61)  
in Jhang, Pakistan

Al-Qadri is a professor and the founder of Minhaj ul Qur’an International Worldwide, and the Minhaj Welfare Foundation. Al-Qadri has authored some 450 published works and given more than 6,000 lectures on various subjects which are aired on international satellite channels. He also served as a jurist consult (legal advisor) on Islamic law for the Supreme Court and the Federal Shari’ah Court of Pakistan and has worked as a specialist adviser on Islamic curricula for the Federal Ministry of Education of Pakistan. In March 2010, Qadri issued a 600-page fatwa, which declared terrorists and suicide bombers to be unbelievers. The US State Department declared the fatwa to be significant and that it takes back Islam from terrorists.



**Moez Masoud**

**Preacher**

**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 4 July 1978 (age 34)  
in Cairo, Egypt

Described by The Economist in 2011 as one of the world’s five most influential Muslim preachers, Moez Masoud is an Egyptian spiritual guide, television and radio presenter, and activist who focuses on the fields of contemporary spirituality, inter-faith dialogue, and Islam in the modern world. Founder of al-Tareeq al-Sahh (The Right Way) Institute. In 2012 Masoud was a key speaker at the Council of Europe’s World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg. Masoud is active on various social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, where he has nearly two million online followers.



**Sheikh Abdul Rahman  
Al-Sudais**

**Qur’an Recitor**

**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 10 Feb 1960 (age 52)  
in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Al-Sudais is the chief of the Imams at the Grand Mosque of Mecca. He memorized the Qur’an at the age of 12, and studied Shari’a at Riyadh University, Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, and Umm al Qura University. Al-Sudais is also popular for his sermons and stance on peaceful conflict-resolution.



**H.E. Dr Ahmet Davutoğlu**  
**Political**

**Country:** Turkey  
**Born:** 26 Feb 1959 (age 53)  
in Taşkent, Konya, Turkey

Ahmet Davutoğlu is the Foreign Minister of Turkey. He is a political science academic who became ambassador and then chief advisor to the Prime Minister before being appointed Foreign Minister on May 1, 2009. Davutoğlu is considered to be the most important figure for redefining the new framework of Turkish foreign policy under the AKP's rule. Professor Davutoğlu has published several books and articles on foreign policy in Turkish and English. His books include *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory*, *The Civilizational Transformation and The Muslim World* in English. His book *Strategic Depth* is especially influential in Turkey's foreign policy orientation.



**Sheikh Mahmud Effendi**  
**Spiritual Guide**

**Country:** Turkey  
**Born:** 1929 (age 83)  
in Trabzon, Turkey

Sh. Mahmud Ustaosmanoglu, also known as Sheikh Mahmud Efendi, is one of the most popular Islamic teachers in Turkey today. He has hundreds of thousands of followers and has established various religious, social and charity organisations such as the Marifet Association, the Federation of Marifet Associations and Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaah Confederation. Although he himself has moved to the suburbs of Istanbul, his stronghold is still the Fatch area where his followers are easily recognisable by their traditional dress. He emphasises service to humanity on the basis of sincerity.



**H.E. Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq Fayadh**  
**Scholarly**

**Country:** Iraq  
**Born:** 1930 (age 82) in Jaghori, Ghazni, Afghanistan

Grand Ayatollah Fayadh, originally from Afghanistan, is one of the four marjas of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq—one of the two most important seats of learning in Twelver Shi'ism. Fayadh is known for his quietist approach to politics and is well-respected especially amongst the Shi'a population of South Asia.



**H.E. Dr Anwar Ibrahim**  
**Political**

**Country:** Malaysia  
**Born:** 10 August 1947 (age 65) in Cherok Tok Kun, Penang, Malayan Union

Ibrahim is a Malaysian politician of global stature. He is the former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, former Finance Minister and is currently the leader of the Malaysian Opposition Coalition. In 2010 he was awarded the lifetime achievement award from The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS UK). He is well-known for his liberal Islamic stance on politics, and is influential as a leader and role model for young people. Ibrahim's coalition now controls 4 of 13 state governments. If led by Anwar, it would have a fair chance of winning the next national election in 2013. In December 2010, he was suspended from Parliament for 6 months.



**H.H. Dr Syedna  
Mohammad  
Burhannuddin Saheb**  
Preacher  
Country: India  
Born: 6 March 1915 (age 97)

Mohammad Burhanuddin Saheb is the leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community, which stems from the Ismaili Shi'a sect of Islam. As leader of the Bohras, he has been influential in the fields of education and the development of community institutions in Mumbai, India and across the globe.



**H.E. Lakhdar  
Brahimi**  
Political  
Country: Algeria  
Born: 1 January 1934 (age 78)

Lakhdar Brahimi is a veteran politician and current UN and Arab League Envoy to Syria. He has spent much of life seeking peace and stability in troubled areas. Brahimi is a member of the “The Elders” group, which aims to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts. He played a major role in the “The Taif Agreement”, which managed to end 17 years of civil war in Lebanon. He then became special representative for the United Nations and was sent on missions to South Africa, Haiti, Nigeria, Cameroon, Burundi, Sudan, Afghanistan, Zaire, Yemen, Angola, Liberia, the Ivory Cost and finally to Syria after the resignation of Kofi Anan in 2012.



**Dr Zakir Abdul  
Karim Naik**  
Preacher  
Country: India  
Born: 18 October 1965 (age 47)

Zakir Abdul-Karim Naik is a renowned public intellectual who has made it his mission to teach the world about Islam. He hosts huge public events where he speaks on the subject, highlighting misconceptions and promoting understanding about the faith. Naik also challenges leaders in other faiths to public debates that are broadcast around the world on Peace TV—a satellite channel that he helped to found. He is also the founder of the Islamic Research Foundation, which runs United Islamic Aid. He was listed as one of the most powerful Indians in 2010.



**Uthman Taha**  
Arts & Culture  
Country: Syria  
Born: 1934 (age 78)

Uthman Taha is an internationally acclaimed Arabic calligrapher. After training with the world's top calligraphers, Taha began working on producing copies of the Qur'an, or mushafs with the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an. Of the copies he has worked on, over 200 million have been distributed and are continually sought by students of the Qur'an and Muslims across the globe.



**Dr. Tariq  
Ramadan**  
Scholarly

Country: Switzerland  
Born: 26 August 1962 (age 50)

Ramadan is Europe's preeminent Muslim intellectual writing about Islam in public life. He is a professor of Islamic Studies at Oxford University and formerly a visiting professor at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. He is the president of the European Muslim Network think tank based in Brussels and is an advisor to the European Union on religion. Ramadan has written 15 books and produced over 100 recordings. Since a six-year bar on entrance to the US, Ramadan made his first public appearance in New York in April 2010.



**Professor Mustafa  
Abu Sway**  
Scholarly

Country: Palestinian Territories  
Born: 21 January 1958 (age 54)

Professor Abu Sway has recently been appointed as the first holder of the Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Ghazali's Work at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and at Al-Quds University (see p. 179). He has been Professor of Philosophy and Islamic Studies at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem, Palestine, since 1996. Prof. Abu Sway earned his BA from Bethlehem University (1984), and MA (1985) and PhD (1993) from Boston College, USA (Dissertation: The Development of Al-Ghazali's Genetic Epistemology). He taught at the International Islamic University in Malaysia (1993-96), and was a visiting Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at the Wilkes Honors College at Florida Atlantic University, as well as a visiting professor of Islamic Studies at Bard College, NY.



**H.E. Grand Ayatollah  
Abdullah Jawadi Amoli**  
Scholarly

Country: Iran  
Born: 1933 (age 79)

Grand Ayatollah Amoli is a leading theologian and interpreter of the Qur'an. He is a prolific scholar having published over 300 articles and books. He is most well-known for his commentary of the Qur'an the Tafsir al Tasnim, which has been lauded by his peers. Amoli has remained a very public figure throughout his career, having led a diplomatic mission to the USSR, and continues to speak publicly on current affairs.



**Khairat Al-Shater**  
Political

Country: Egypt  
Born: 4 May 1950 (age 62)

Khairat Al-Shater is a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood. He was their first choice for standing in the Presidential elections, but was disqualified by the electoral commission. He has been an active member of the Brotherhood since the 1980s and consequently during Mubarak's regime, he was imprisoned several times. Charismatic and outspoken, he is known as the real powerhouse of the MB. He is also a very successful business man and has financed many of the MB's activities.



❧ The Final ❧

450

# THE LISTS

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1. **Scholarly** p. 107  
These scholars, thinkers, and educators are well-respected leaders who have made significant contributions to the study and cultivation of Islamic knowledge and Muslim culture.
2. **Political** p. 117  
These leaders possess high positions of power over substantial groups of people and exert influence from their status, reputation, or political clout.
3. **Administration of Religious Affairs** p. 125  
These agents of change are responsible for founding and/or directing institutions that influence the religious affairs of Muslims.
4. **Preachers & Spiritual Guides** p. 132  
Preachers rely on charisma to inspire millions through multimedia while spiritual guides traditionally teach through live study circles and individualized directives to their disciples.
5. **Philanthropy, Charity & Development** p. 137  
These activists work in the field, affecting the world through poverty alleviation programmes, emergency aid, charitable giving, sponsorships of various initiatives for people and communities to become self-reliant.
6. **Social Issues** p. 140  
These individuals address various social issues such as health, education, women's rights, the environment, human rights and conflict resolution.
7. **Business** p. 147  
These entrepreneurs head and direct key organisations in the business world pushing innovation and financial development forward.
8. **Science & Technology** p. 150  
These are the main figures from the world of science and technology.
9. **Arts & Culture** p. 153  
These are artists and cultural ambassadors whose work has become part of people's daily lives.
10. **Qur'an Reciters** p. 158  
The recitation of the Qur'an is a special art that is valued by Muslim communities across the world. The word al-Qur'an literally means 'the recitation' referring to its origins as an oral text.
11. **Media** p. 160  
In an age of impulsive news and innovative media, these personalities have garnered influence from their activity in the media world.
12. **Celebrities & Sports Stars** p. 163  
These instantly recognisable figures have a huge public following due to their prominence in popular culture and sport.
13. **Radicals** p. 165  
These individuals are responsible for heinous acts and controversial statements that are rejected by Muslim orthodoxy, separating them clearly from others engaged in armed conflict.

# SCHOLARLY

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — ALGERIA —

#### **Cherif, H.E. Ambassador Prof. Dr Mustafa**

Mustafa Cherif, a former ambassador of Algeria to Egypt, is a philosopher and researcher specializing in international relations and dialogue between cultures. Co-founder and co-chair of the Muslim Christian Friendship in France and the Mediterranean, Cherif has written numerous works on religion, civilization and dialogue between cultures.

### — BAHRAIN —

#### **Yaquby, Nizam**

Nizam Yaquby is one of the most respected scholars of Islamic finance and sits on many advisory boards including Citigroup Inc., and HSBC Amanah. A highly sought-after expert with an immense breadth of experience with the Muslim community, Yaquby received the Annual Islamic Finance Summit's Outstanding Contribution to Islamic Finance Award.

### — EGYPT —

#### **Al-'awa, Sheikh Dr Mohammed Salim**

Mohammed Salim is the secretary general of the International Union of Muslim Scholars and the head of the Egyptian Association for Culture and Dialogue. He is also a founder of Egypt's moderate Islamic political party Al-Wasat and regularly appears on Egyptian television and on the Al-Jazeera channel.

#### **Al-Azhari, Sheikh Usama al-Sayyid**

Sheikh Usama is an Azhari scholar and Senior Fellow of Kalam Research & Media. He teaches Hadith, Logic, and Islamic Creed at the renowned Al-Azhar Mosque's Riwaq al-Atrak in Cairo, Egypt. He also holds a teaching post in the Faculty of Usul al-Din and Da'wah at Al-Azhar University, Egypt and is the author of several works on the Islamic sciences, most notably the seminal *Ihya' Ulum al-Hadith* (The Revival of the Hadith Sciences).

### — IRAN —

#### **Amoli, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi**

Read bio on page "H.E. Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi Amoli" on page 103 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

#### **Damad, H.E. Ayatollah Dr Seyyed Mostafa Mohaghegh**

Damad is one of the very few high-level clerics in Iran to have been educated in international law in the West. Damad is a forceful advocate for a more progressive interpretation of shari'a. He is a very well-respected scholar, dean of the Department of Islamic Studies at The Academy of Sciences of Iran, and a professor of Law and Islamic Philosophy at Tehran University. In October 2010, at the Pope's behest, he addressed the Synod in the Vatican, stressing the Muslims' view towards Christians as one of friendship, trust and mutual understanding.

#### **Shirazi, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim**

Grand Ayatollah Shirazi is a leading theologian teaching at the seminary in Qom, one of the two most important centers of learning for Twelver Shi'a. He is most influential for his *Tafsir Al-Amthal*, which is a very popular simplified commentary of the Qur'an. He has also spearheaded the creation of schools and magazines devoted to young people. He has been outspoken in his support for the Palestinians.

#### **Sobhani, H.E. Ayatollah Jafar**

Sobhani is a leading member of the Council of Mujtahids in the Seminary of Qom; one of the two most important centers of learning in Twelver Shi'ism. He is the director of the Imam Sadiq Institute, Iran. His work in all areas of the Islamic sciences is widely known and receives critical attention. Sobhani is a prolific writer having published over 300 scholarly works.

#### **Soroush, Abdolkarim**

Soroush is a well-known figure in the religious intellectual movement in Iran. His writings were essential reading during the time of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, though they have since become more important outside Iran than inside it. Soroush remains a public intellectual who criticizes the Iranian government from a modernist religious perspective. He wrote a 10-point manifesto for the Green Movement.

— IRAQ —

**Al-Najafi, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Bashir**

Grand Ayatollah Bashir Al-Najafi is one of the four marjas of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq, and one of Iraq's most powerful Shi'a clerics. As a marja of the Hawza in Najaf, Iraq's premier Shi'a institution, Najafi holds a position of immense authority. Najafi, originally from Pakistan, holds less sway amongst Iraq's population than the other marjas but has significant clout in South Asia.

**Al-Sadr, H.E. Ayatollah**

**Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail**

Ayatollah Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail Al-Sadr is the most senior Shi'a cleric in Baghdad, Iraq. He heads the Ayatollah Seyyed Hussain Ismail Al-Sadr Foundation Trust, which runs humanitarian, development, and peace and reconciliation projects in Iraq. His role as a social leader and humanitarian has increased significantly during the recent hostilities in Iraq. The issue of reconciliation and dialogue between Iraq's different religious and ethnic communities has featured heavily in the Ayatollah's recent efforts.

**Fayadh, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq**  
Read bio on page page 101 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

**Hakim, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Said**  
Grand Ayatollah Hakim is one of the four marjas of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq, and accordingly is one of Iraq's most important Shi'a clerics. His family is very prominent in Iraq, holding key positions in Shi'a social and religious organizations and also in government. Hakim leads around 5 percent of the Iraqi Shi'a population. His influence stems partly from his relationship to Grand Ayatollah Mohsen Al-Hakim, a former religious leader of the Twelver Shi'a in Iraq.

— JORDAN —

**Khasawneh, H.E. Sheikh Abdul Karim**

Sheikh Khasawneh was appointed by royal decree to the post of Grand Mufti of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in February 2010. Sheikh Khasawneh is the former mufti of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

— LEBANON —

**Qabbani, H.E. Dr Mohammad Rashid**

Mohammad Rashid Qabbani is the Grand Mufti of

Lebanon and the country's leading Sunni scholar. Qabbani speaks out regularly against sectarianism and violence.

— MOROCCO —

**Abdul-Rahman, Prof. Dr Taha**

Abdul-Rahman is a Moroccan philosopher famous for his work in trying to create an ethical humanistic modernism on the basis of the ethics and values of Islam. He has taught logic in Muhammad V University for over 30 years. Abdul-Rahman has won the Moroccan Book Prize twice, and was awarded the ISESCO Prize for Islamic Philosophy in 2006. He is the president of the Wisdom Circle of Thinkers, Morocco, and a member of the International Union of Muslim Scholars.

**Al-Rasuani, Mulai Ali**

Mulai Ali is a Muslim scholar and historian who has worked as a preacher and lecturer all over the world for most of his life and is well-known for his gentle approach to teaching. Al-Rasuani holds positions in several religious institutions in Morocco, including The Association of Scholars of Morocco and the Committee in charge of supporting Islamic education for Muslim youth in Spain. He has written and translated a number of books in the fields of religion and history.

— OMAN —

**Al-Khalili, H.E. Sheikh Ahmad**

Sheikh Al-Khalili is the Grand Mufti of Oman. He is head of religious institutions there, and is charged with ensuring that the religious teachings of Oman follow a moderate path. Al-Khalili issues fatwas on behalf of Oman's establishment and represents Oman in Islamic events abroad.

— PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES —

**Abu Sway, Prof. Mustafa**

Read bio on page page 103 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

**Al-Tamimi, H.E. Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab**  
Al-Tamimi is a leading scholar and Chief Islamic Justice of Palestine. Popular as an outspoken thinker and leader on Palestinian- Israeli relations, Al-Tamimi is the head of the Palestinian Center for Religion and Civilization Dialogue.

— SAUDI ARABIA —

**Al-Madkhali, Sheikh Rabi' Ibn Haadi 'Umayr**  
Sheikh Rabi' Ibn Haadi 'Umayr Al-Madkhali is one of the most radical thinkers in the Salafi movement. He is an influential writer and speaker, whose influence has led to an independent faction within Salafism. Al-Madkhali's adherents are known as Madkhali Salafis and make up one of the most significant and influential branches inside the Salafi movement.

**Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa**

Hasan Musa Al-Saffar is a Saudi Shi'a reformist leader who has made significant progress in communicating with Salafi leaders and other senior officials in Saudi Arabia. This is important as sectarian tensions throughout the Muslim World have risen with the increased Sunni-Shi'a hostilities in Iraq.

— SYRIA —

**Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed Ratib**

The son of a well-known Syrian religious scholar who left a large collection of books and manuscripts, Dr Al-Nabulsi is known for his lectures on Islam. Al-Nabulsi has represented Syria all over the world in many Islamic conferences. Muslims know him through the lessons, orations, symposiums and interviews broadcast on radio and television. He has written a number of Islamic books, many of which have been translated into English.

**Al-Yaqoubi, Sheikh Muhammad**

Sheikh al-Yaqoubi traces his lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Al-Hasan. A widely revered scholar, al-Yaqoubi's influence has spread as far as Europe, where the Islamic Society of Stockholm elected him as the Mufti of Sweden. His criticism of the Syrian government's response to protests made his say in Syrian untenable and so he has been forced to leave the country.

**Al-Zuhayli, Dr Prof. Wahba Mustafa**

Dr al-Zuhayli is a leading scholar of Islamic law and legal theory and is noted for his extensive scholarship. He is also considered an expert on Islamic international law and is chairman of Islamic jurisprudence at the College of Shari'a at Damascus University. Al-Zuhayli is a popular preacher and a proponent of traditional orthodox Sunni Islam.

**Hassoun, H.E. Sheikh Dr Ahmad Badr Al-Din**  
Hassoun has been the Grand Mufti of the Republic of Syria since 2004 when he succeeded the late Sheikh Ahmed Kuftaro. He is an advocate of inter-faith dialogue, and is very vocal in his opinion that states should be ruled on a civil rather than religious basis, believing that secularism is not synonymous with atheism, a sentiment that holds great sway in Syria's religiously diverse society.

**Itr, Dr Nur Al-Din**

Sheikh Itr is an Al-Azhar-trained sheikh based in Syria. A leading scholar of the Qur'anic sciences and Hadith, he is credited for participating in an incredibly successful educational movement out of Damascus: The Qubaisiat, a female-only Sufi network which is the leading Islamic movement in Syria—with Sheikh Itr as the principal instructor.

— TUNISIA —

**Djait, Professor Hisham**

Professor Hisham Djait is a well-known pan-Arab intellectual from Tunisia. A professor of history at the University of Tunis, he has written important works such as: *Al Fitna, L'Europe et l'Islam* and his most recent book on the Seerah (biography) of the Prophet (PBUH).

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*Sub-Saharan Africa*

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— BURKINA FASO —

**Dokori, Dr Abu Bakr**

Abu Bakr Dokori is the president of the Islamic University of Ouagadougou. He is a major scholar and advisor to the president. Dokori is also Burkina Faso's representative to ISESCO. He is one of the leading Muslim scholars in a country with around 9.6 million Muslims.

— ETHIOPIA —

**Idris, H.E. Hajji Omar**

Omar Idris is a mufti and leader in Ethiopian Muslim politics. A proponent of Muslim unity, he is the current chair of the Addis Ababa Majlis and also the chair of the Addis Ababa Ulema Unity Forum.

— GAMBIA, THE —

**Jah, H.E. Ambassador Prof. Dr Omar**

Jah is an important figure in the Muslim community of Gambia and in Gambian scholarship on Islam. Jah was the former Gambian ambassador to Saudi Arabia. He is now the secretary of the Muslim Scholars Council, Gambia, and a professor of Islamic Civilization and Thought at the University of Gambia where he is the dean of the Humanities faculty.

— KENYA —

**Mazrui, Dr Ali Al'amin**

Dr Mazrui is a prominent scholar of African and Islamic studies and an outspoken commentator on Islam. Noted for his stance on the applicability of shari'a law within a democratic system and his denunciations of violence in the name of religion, he is a widely-respected academic. A prolific writer, Dr Mazrui is an Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities and the Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

— MAURITANIA —

**Al-Hajj, Shaykh Murabit**

Shaykh Murabit al-Hajj is a Mauritanian scholar who has devoted his life to learning and teaching Islamic sciences. Based in a remote village in Mauritania, he has trained hundreds if not thousands of scholars, most notably Sheikh Hamza Yusuf (p. 94). At the age of 95 he still continues his daily routine of teaching.

— NIGERIA —

**Ahmed, Dr Ibrahim Datti**

Dr Ibrahim Datti Ahmed is the President-General of the Supreme Council for Shari'a in Nigeria (SCSN). The SCSN is the focal Islamic religious institution that deals with shari'a in Nigeria, and is also a representative body of Nigeria's Muslim scholars. Recently, the SCSN has petitioned for fair treatment of Muslim military officers and has spoken out against prejudice and violence against Muslims, especially in light of the violent clashes between Christians and Muslims near the city of Jos in January 2010.

— SOUTH AFRICA —

**Desai, Mufti Ebrahim**

A prominent Deobandi sheikh, Mufti Desai runs askimam.org, issuing numerous fatwas online through the Camperdown-based Islamic institution Darul Iftaa, Madrassah Inaamiyyah where he is the principle mufti and a senior lecturer.

**Hendricks, Sheikh Seraj**

Hendricks is the mufti of Cape Town and imam and teacher at the Zawiya Mosque. He is a leading scholar on Sufism in South Africa, and a patron of Dome Publications. Hendricks is seen as one of the highest authorities on Islamic scholarship for South Africa's large and affluent Muslim population.

— UGANDA —

**Mamdani, Mahmood**

Mamdani is the Herbert Lehman Professor of Government in the Departments of Anthropology and Political Science at Columbia University in the United States. Mamdani is also the director of Columbia's Institute of African Studies. He is a former president of the Council for Development of Social Research in Africa in Dakar, Senegal. Mamdani is well-known for his book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*, which became significant in liberal policy circles in the US.

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*Asia*

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— AZERBAIJAN —

**Ibrahimoglu, Ilgar**

Ibrahimoglu is a charismatic young Islamic scholar and human rights activist who is the head of a pro-Iranian Shi'a congregation in Baku and Azerbaijan's Center for Freedom of Conscience and Worship. Ibrahimoglu received his religious education in Qom, Iran, but also studied human rights in Poland. This combination of Islamic and secular education is attractive for a population that was only recently part of the Soviet Union.

**Pashazade, Sheikh ul Islam  
Haji Allahshukur Hummat**

Pashazade is not only the Grand Mufti of Azerbaijan, but also the Mufti, by election, of the whole

Caucasus region. Pashazade is also the world's only Sunni-Shi'a Grand Mufti, giving each group fatwas according to their relevant madhab, reflecting Azerbaijan's Sunni-Shi'a mix. He co-chaired the World Summit of Religious Leaders, held in Azerbaijan in April 2010.

— INDIA —

**Al-Mustafa, Allamah Zia**

Allamah Zia Al-Mustafa Sahib is a well known scholar who has taught hadith for over 40 years in India. He has memorised 60,000 hadiths with their chain of narrators and authenticity and his students who have become scholars in their own right number in the thousands. He has been nominated as successor [*Khilafat*] of Mufti Azam e Hind Mustafa Akhtar Rida Khan .

**Engineer, Asghar Ali**

Engineer is a Dawoodi Bohra Ismaili. He is the leader of the progressive Dawoodi Bohra movement and a prominent Islamic scholar who is famous for his take on Islam and contemporary issues. Engineer has written many books and published articles in many international journals. He is the founding chairman of the Asian Muslim Action Network, the Institute of Islamic Studies, and the Center for the Study of Society and Secularism.

**Khan, Wahiduddin**

Wahiduddin Khan is an Islamic scholar who strongly advocates peace, interfaith, and coexistence. He is the author of over 200 books including a translation and commentary of the Qur'an into simple English. He is also the co-founder, along with his son, Saniasnain Khan, of the popular publisher of children's book – 'Goodword'.

**Nadwi, Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen**

Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen Nadwi has published over 100 books in Arabic, English and Malayalam covering Qur'anic Sciences, Islamic Jurisprudence, Prophetic Hadith, Comparative Religions, Arabic Language and Literature as well as other topics. He is the founder Darul Huda Islamic University, the Editor in Chief of an international Journal of Islamic Studies, and a member of many regional [Kerala], national and international organisations.

**Sadiq, Maulana Kalbe**

Sadiq is a well-known scholar of Shi'a Islam. His aim is to break down the existing barriers between Hindus and Muslims in India. Currently, Sadiq is also the Vice President of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, focused on shari'a law in India. He runs a chain of schools and colleges in Uttar Pradesh.

— INDONESIA —

**Baswedan, Anies**

In 2007, Baswedan was selected as rector of Paramadina University, making him the youngest university rector in Indonesia. He received the Nakasone Yasuhiro Award from The Institute for International Policy Studies (IIPS) in Japan in 2010. Baswedan was also named one of the World's 100 Public Intellectuals in 2008 by Foreign Policy Magazine, as well as Young Global Leader 2009 by the World Economic Forum.

**Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa**

Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa Bisri is widely revered as a religious scholar, poet, novelist, painter and Muslim intellectual. He has strongly influenced the NU's (Nahdlatul Ulama) social and political development over the past thirty years. He heads the prestigious Raudlatuth Tholibin Islamic boarding school in Rembang, Central Java. Mustofa Bisri's role in combining spirituality with artistic expression is widely admired in Indonesia, where he is regarded as a cultural icon. Often called the "President of Poets," he is celebrated for his courage in defending artistic and religious freedom in the face of radical onslaughts.

**Maarif, Syafii**

Maarif is one of Indonesia's most famous scholars whose political comments regularly attract significant attention. In 2008 he won the prestigious Mag-saysay Award for guiding Muslims to embrace tolerance and pluralism. This former president of the influential Muhammadiyah organization is actively involved in interfaith and peace movements both domestically and internationally, largely through his Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity. He was recognized for his role in promoting interfaith dialogue and religious harmony at the Habibie Awards. Maarif is also a professor of history at the National University of Yogyakarta, and a productive author and columnist, currently writing two

regular columns in 'Republika' newspaper and also in Gatra Magazine.

— MALAYSIA —

**Al-Akiti, Dr Muhammad Afifi**

Al-Akiti is a young scholar, a trained theologian and philologist. He is a lecturer of Islamic studies with the Faculty of Theology at Oxford University, a KFAS Fellow in Islamic Studies, and a fellow at Worcester College. He is internationally acclaimed for his 2005 fatwa, 'Defending the transgressed by censuring the reckless against the killing of civilians' written in response to the 7 July London bombings, which was praised by scholars of Islam and gained a massive readership on the Internet. Al-Akiti was appointed Privy Councillor to the State of Perak, Malaysia, by the Crown Prince of Perak. In 2012, he was the sole recipient of the Darjah Dato' Paduka Cura Si-Manja Kini (DPCM), which carries the Malaysian title of Dato', in the Sultan of Perak Birthday Honours List.

**Al-Attas, Dr Syed Muhammad Naquib**

Dr Al-Attas is considered by many to be a giant of scholarship in the Muslim World. An influential philosopher and thinker, he has written on the traditional Islamic sciences as well as sufism, metaphysics, and philosophy. He has served at various global academic institutions as an educator and lead administrator and is also a noted calligrapher.

**Bakar, Dr Osman**

Professor Dr. Datuk Osman Bakar is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, and Deputy CEO of the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies—Malaysia. He has published 15 books and over 250 articles on Islamic thought and civilisation, particularly on Islamic philosophy and science, as well as on contemporary Islam, and inter-religious and inter-civilisational dialogue. He has served as advisor and consultant to a variety of international academic and professional organisations and institutions, including UNESCO and The Qatar Foundation. He served as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) at the University of Malaya (1995–2000); . He was awarded a Datukship by the Malaysian King in 2000.

**Kamali, Prof. Mohammad Hashim**

Originally from Afghanistan, Kamali is a dean and

professor at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) and the International Islamic University in Malaysia. Kamali is also the current Chairman and CEO of the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies in Malaysia. He is the world's leading expert on comparative studies between Islamic and modern law. He is one of the most prolific producers of quality scholarship on Islam in the world today. Kamali received the King Abdullah I bin Hussein International Award for the year 2010 in recognition of his intellectual and academic contributions towards serving Islam and Muslims. In Feb 2010, he worked on the new constitution of Somalia.

— PAKISTAN —

**Ahmed, Dr Akbar**

Dr. Akbar Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun chair of Islamic Studies at the American University, Washington DC. He has also taught at Cambridge, Princeton and Harvard. An anthropologist by training, he was inducted into the Anthropology's Hall of Fame in July 2004, he has produced a TV series ('Discovering Islam') for the BBC and a more recent documentary ('Journey into America; the Challenge of Islam'). He is regularly interviewed by leading media and has authored many books about Muslim societies.

**Al-Qadri, Dr Muhammad Tahir**

Read bio on page 100 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

**Hashmi, Dr Farhat**

Hashmi is an influential lecturer and scholar. She has been instrumental in the burgeoning field of the role of women in Islam and has contributed greatly to its literature. Hashmi is the founder of Al-Huda International, an NGO actively promoting Islamic education and welfare since 1994.

**Najafi, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Hussain**

Grand Ayatollah Hussain Najafi is the only marja in South Asia. Based in the Sargodha district of the Punjab province in Pakistan, he was the first scholar from that country to be given the status of marjiyyat and is one of only two Ayatollahs from Pakistan.

— SINGAPORE —

**Kassim, Ustaz Ibrahim**

Ibrahim Kassim is one of Singapore's most respected

Islamic scholars. A judge of the shari'a court in Singapore and the sheikh of the Chistiyya Sufi tariqah in Singapore, Kassim is deeply involved in the rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah members that are under detention for plotting terrorist attacks in Singapore. This rehabilitation work has garnered international attention as a model for the reintegration of suspected terrorists that could be replicated in other countries.

## Europe

### — BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA —

#### **Karic, Dr Enes**

Dr Enes Karic is a professor of Qur'anic studies and history of the interpretation of the Qur'an at the Faculty of Islamic Studies with the University of Sarajevo. He previously served as the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports with the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1994–1996. Dr Karic has written extensively on the Qur'an and Islamic studies in English and Bosnian.

### — FRANCE —

#### **Bencheikh, Sheikh Sohaib**

Bencheikh is a theologian, a modernist former Grand Mufti of Marseilles, and one of the most influential social leaders and scholars of Islam in France. Bencheikh is also head of the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies. Marseilles is a cosmopolitan city with a huge population of Muslims of North African ancestry. Bencheikh is a passionate advocate for integration of the Muslim population, hijab rights and women's involvement as imams in the Muslim community.

### — GERMANY —

#### **Denffer, Dr Ahmed Von**

Dr Ahmed von Denffer is an influential figure in Germany. He has been pivotal in German Islam and is a prominent author and translator of Islamic publications in the German language. He has published works on the Qur'an, the Islamic Sciences, and Christian-Muslim relations.

#### **H.E. Ambassador, Dr Murad Hoffman**

Hoffman is an author and Muslim intellectual, re-

spected by both Muslims and non-Muslims. He is a prominent former German diplomat and author of several books on Islam, including *Journey to Makkah* and *The Future of Islam in the West and the East*, published in 2008. Many of his books and essays focus on Islam's place in the West and in the United States—specifically in light of the post-9/11 climate.

### — RUSSIA —

#### **Gaynutdinov, H.E. Sheikh Ravil Ismagilovich**

Sheikh Ravil Gaynutdinov is a Moscow-based Muslim scholar. Among various academic roles he is Grand Mufti of Russia and chairman of the Union of Muftis of Russia. He is probably the single most important figure in the schema of Russian Islam. As a member of the Russian president's Council for Relations with Religious Associations he is a key figure in relations between the Kremlin and Russia's Muslim population.

### — SWITZERLAND —

#### **Ramadan, Dr Tariq**

Read bio on page page 103 in 'Honorable Mentions.'

### — TURKEY —

#### **Kalin, Dr Ibrahim**

Ibrahim Kalin, Ph.D., is Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey in charge of Public Diplomacy. Dr. Kalin is the founding director of the SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research based in Ankara, Turkey and served as its director from 2005 to 2009. He is a fellow at the Prince Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. Dr. Kalin has published widely on Islamic philosophy, relations between Islam and the West, and Turkish foreign policy.

#### **Karaman, Prof. Dr Hayrettin**

Karaman is one of the most prominent scholars of Islam in Turkey, and the preeminent scholar of Islamic law (shari'a) there. He publishes popular and academic texts extensively and writes a weekly column in the newspaper 'Yeni Safak' (New Dawn). His long career in academia has garnered him much respect. At the pinnacle of his career Karaman was a dean at Turkey's premier university, Marmara

University. He left this position at the height of the headscarf controversy in 2001.

**Çagrıci, H.E. Prof. Dr Mustafa**

Mustafa Çagrıci is the mufti of Istanbul as well as a theology professor and is a respected figure among Turkish Muslims. He welcomed and prayed with Pope Benedict XVI in the Blue Mosque in 2006.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Ali, Dr Anas Al-Shaikh**

Anas Al-Shaikh Ali, CBE, is the chair of the small but dynamic Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) and the director of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) London Office. Ali has been at the forefront of a number of international campaigns for better relations between faiths, specifically in promoting the 'A Common Word' initiative and also the fight against the demonization of Islam in media, founding the UK's Forum against Islamophobia and Racism.

**Motala, Hadhrat Sheikhul Hadith Maulana Yusuf**  
Sheikh Motala is the founder of the Dar ul Ulum Al-Arabia Al-Ilamia in Holcombe, Bury, Lancashire. He is a scholar's scholar— many of the United Kingdom's young Deobandi scholars have studied under his patronage. Sheikh Motala has an expansive network of students and educational institutions which he has founded.

**Pirzada, Shaykh Muhammad Imdad Hussain**

Shaykh Muhammad Imdad Hussain Pirzada is a scholar who has actively promoted education and charity work in England and Pakistan. His works include books about the Qur'an, Islam, Arabic Grammar and many other topics in Arabic, Urdu and English. At present he is writing Tafseer Imdad-ul-Karam; a modern exegesis of the Qur'an. His charity organisations work mainly in Pakistan, but have also alleviated human suffering in other parts of the world [esp. Indonesia]. He runs a very successful school in the UK [Al-Karam Secondary School].

**Shah-Kazemi, Dr Reza**

Dr Shah-Kazemi is a research associate at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. He is a specialist in Comparative Religion and has published many books including 'Paths to Transcendence' and 'The Other in the Light of the One: The Universality of the Qur'an and Interfaith Dialogue'.

## Oceania

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— AUSTRALIA —

**El Imam, Sheikh Fehmi**

El Imam is one of Australia's most senior Islamic scholars and leaders. As a founding member of Victoria's Islamic community, he has had a major influence on the development of Islam in Australia. He is secretary general of the Victorian Board of Imams and also senior imam at the Preston Mosque in Melbourne's northern suburbs.

## North America

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— CANADA —

**Mattson, Ingrid**

Ingrid Mattson has recently become the first chair of Islamic studies at Huron University College in London, Canada. Previously she had worked for 14 years as professor at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. In 2001 she was elected Vice President of ISNA and in 2006 she was elected president, becoming the first woman and the first convert to hold such high positions within the organization. ISNA is the largest Muslim organization in North America, and is an umbrella organization for numerous local and regional Muslim societies and groups in the United States and Canada. She is the author of the acclaimed 'The Story of the Qur'an.'

— UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

**Abdullah, Dr Umar Faruq**

Abdullah is an American convert to Islam who founded and now directs the Nawawi Foundation, a Chicago-based non-profit organization that educates Muslims in the US about Islamic teachings, and conducts research on Islam in America. Abdullah has published 'The Story of Alexander Russell Webb,' a biography of Muhammed Webb, one of the significant early American converts to Islam.

**Al-Alwani, Dr Taha Jaber**

Al-Alwani is an active academic and organizer in the international community of Sunni Muslim scholars. He is the president of Cordoba University, a former chairman of The Fiqh Council of North America,

a member of the OIC's International Islamic Fiqh Academy, and a former president of the US office of the International Institute of Islamic Thought. Al-Alwani is also the author of acclaimed works such as: *Source Methodology in Islamic Jurisprudence*; *Towards a Fiqh for Minorities*; *The Ethics of Disagreement in Islam*; *Ijtihad*; and *The Quran and the Sunnah: The Time-Space Factor*.

**Al-Ninowy, Sheikh Muhammad  
bin Yahya Al-Husayni**

Sheikh Al-Ninowy is the imam of Masjid al-Madina in Atlanta, Georgia and is considered by many

to be a charismatic and influential contemporary scholar. Al-Ninowy traces his lineage back to Al-Imam Ibrahim Al-Mujab, whose lineage is traced to Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. He recently founded an interactive Islamic university, utilizing the latest technology to continue the tradition of Islamic scholarship.

**Chittick, Dr William**

A renowned interpreter and translator of philosophical and mystical Islamic texts, Dr Chittick is most famous for his works on Rumi and Ibn 'Arabi.

## A Common Word: 5-Year Anniversary

'A Common Word Between Us and You' initiative (ACW) was launched on October 13th 2007 initially as an Open Letter signed by 138 leading Muslim scholars and intellectuals (including such figures as the Grand Muftis of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Oman, Bosnia, Russia, and Istanbul) to the leaders of the Christian churches and denominations of the entire world, including His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. In essence it proposed, based on verses from the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Bible, that Islam and Christianity share, at their cores, the twin 'golden' commandments of the paramount importance of loving God and loving one's neighbor. Based on this joint common ground, it called for peace and harmony between Christians and Muslims worldwide, who together comprise over 55% of the world's population. ACW was and is an extended global handshake of interreligious goodwill, friendship and fellowship and consequently of world peace.

ACW is a document which uses religion as the solution to the problems of interreligious tensions. By basing itself on solid theological grounds in both religions—the twin Commandments to love God and love the neighbor—ACW has demonstrated to Christians and Muslims that they have a certain common ground (despite irreducible theological differences) and that both religions require them to have relations based on love not on hatred.

During the 5 years since its launch ACW has become arguably the most influential interfaith

dialogue between Muslims and Christians in history. It has provided a common ground on which thousands of Muslim and Christian religious leaders have been brought together through:

- Initiating a multitude of conferences, seminars, workshops, training programs, university courses etc.
- Inspiring the publication of books, articles, dissertations and reports.
- Founding the regular [every 3 years] Catholic-Muslim Forum which was first held at the Vatican in 2008, and then at the Baptism Site, Jordan, in 2011
- Winning peace and bridge-building awards.
- It formed the basis of the UN Resolution adopting the World Interfaith Harmony Week as an UN Observance Week during the first week of February annually from February 2011.
- It was the impetus for a National Resolution in the USA: the Wamp-Ellison Resolution in the US House of Representatives in 2008
- It led to the formation of the Christian-Muslim peace delegation to Nigeria in May 2012
- It inspired symposiums at Oxford University, Cambridge, Yale, Georgetown and else.

It has also given rise to a variety of other major peace initiatives. This is in addition to around half a million visitors to its website ([www.ACommonWord.com](http://www.ACommonWord.com)) and thousands of newspaper reports on the activities inspired by it.

### **Godlas, Dr Alan**

Godlas is an American academic focusing on Islamic mysticism. He is known for his Islamic studies ([www.uga.edu/islam/](http://www.uga.edu/islam/)) and Sufism websites that are highly regarded as leading academic resources for research on Islam.

### **Jackson, Sherman**

Jackson is the King Faisal Chair in Islamic Thought and Culture and Professor of Religion and American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. He is a well-respected scholar and author of works dealing with Islam, shariah, and the African-American Muslim community. Jackson's most recent work is his translation 'Sufism for Non-Sufis' (2012). Jackson is the co-founder of the American Learning Institute for Muslims (ALIM) and is featured on the Washington Post-Newsweek blog 'On Faith' and the Huffington Post. He is a former chairman of the Fiqh Council of North America and a former professor of Law, Near Eastern Studies, and Afro-American Studies at the University of Michigan.

## *South America*

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### — ARGENTINA —

#### **Garcia, Prof. Muhammad Isa**

Garcia was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He studied Arabic, Islamic studies and theology at Umm Al-Qura University in Mecca. He is a specialist in the origins of Prophetic Tradition. Garcia has translated numerous books, with many only available to a Spanish-speaking readership in his translation. He is also the author of a series named 'Know Islam'.

# POLITICAL

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — ALGERIA —

#### **Bouteflika, H.E. President Abdelaziz**

Bouteflika is the incumbent president of Algeria. During his ten years of presidency, Bouteflika has succeeded in ending a civil war that ran throughout the nineties and was one of the bloodiest civil unrests of the 20th century in the Muslim World. Peace was reached through a process of reconciliation and amnesty that was strongly supported by the Islamist and Nationalist belligerents. Following the constitutional amendment which allowed him to run for a third term, Bouteflika won the April 2009 election with 90.24% of the vote, and is currently serving his third-term as President.

#### **Haddam, Anwar N.**

Haddam is the president and co-founder of the Movement for Liberty and Social Justice (MLJS). He was elected to the Algerian parliament under the Islamic Front for Salvation in 1991. A leading activist, he is an initiator and signatory of the National Contract for a Peaceful and Political Solution to the Algerian Crisis.

#### **Brahimi, H.E. Lakhdar**

Read bio on page page 102 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

### — EGYPT —

#### **Al-Shater, Khairat**

Read bio on page page 103 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

#### **Elbaradei, Dr Mohamed**

Former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Dr ElBaradei, along with the IAEA, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. He took part in some of the protests against the Mubarak regime in 2011, but has been criticised for not doing enough and for being an 'outsider' to local Egyptian affairs. He currently leads the newly-formed National Association for Change, and was widely-endorsed as a potential presidential candidate.

#### **Moussa, H.E. Amr**

Moussa was the Secretary-General of the Arab League, a 22-member forum representing Arab states, from 2001 until 2011. He spent a total of 21 years as Egypt's Ambassador to the UN, India, and Switzerland and served as Egypt's Foreign Minister from 1991 to 2001. His extensive experience in foreign politics and public recognition made him the early favorite to become Egypt's president but he fared poorly at the polls.

### — IRAN —

#### **Ahmadinejad, H.E. President Mahmoud**

Ahmadinejad is the president of Iran and a former University of Science and Industry lecturer. As president, he has enfranchised the politics of the nation's large conservative, working class population which makes him incredibly influential. In doing so, he also marginalized Iran's rising middle class, a fact that curtails some of his influence on Iranian society. He is a strong supporter of Iran's Nuclear Program.

#### **Ebtekar, H.E. Dr Masoumeh**

Dr Ebtekar was the first female Vice President of Iran in 1997, the highest political office to be reached by a woman in the country, and has remained at the center of the revolutionary movement in Iran since 1979. A scientist, journalist, and politician, she frequently writes on environmental, political, social and women's issues in Persian and English. She is a considerable force in the reformist movement in Iran, and one of the founding members of the reformist Islamic Iran Participation Front.

#### **Jafari, Major General Mohammad Ali**

General Mohammad Ali Jafari is the Chief Commander of the Iranian Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (also known as the Revolutionary Guard), an 300,000 strong elite faction of the Iranian armed forces—separate from the army—that reports directly to the Velayat-e Faqih. The Revolutionary Guard Corps occupies cabinet positions, parliament seats, and controls an extensive business empire, which it partially used to fund and direct Shi'a movements abroad such as Hezbollah, and the Mahdi Army. Because of this, Jafari has a significant degree of influence in Iraq and Lebanon.

#### **Jalili, Saeed**

Jalili is secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council and the chief Iranian nuclear negotiator.

The nuclear issue is central to both Iranian domestic politics—nuclear technology has become somewhat of a goal for Iran—and international geopolitics, as many countries, particularly Israel and the US, are wary of further nuclear proliferation. Jalili was brought in after former negotiator Ali Larajani resigned. His role is pivotal in the future security of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the success of its nuclear program.

#### **Khatami, H.E. Sayyid Mohammad**

Khatami is a reformist politician who served as president of Iran from 1997 to 2005. Although he was ineffective at bringing around many of the changes from his mandate that were sought by Iranian society, he remains a figurehead of the reformist movement. Khatami was elected to the first Majles Al-Shura and is known internationally for his proposal of the UN 'Dialogue Among Civilizations' initiative, a movement he hopes will counter the prevailing sentiment that there was a 'Clash of Civilizations.' He continues his work in inter-civilizational dialogue and internal reform through two NGOs that he founded and heads.

#### **Larjani, Mohammed;**

#### **Larjani, Sadegh; Larjani, Ali**

These three brothers respectively hold the following positions in the Iranian government: Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights (Mohammed); President of the Judicature (Sadegh) and Chairman of the Parliament of Iran (Ali).

#### **Mousavi, Mir-Hossein**

Mir-Hossein Mousavi is an Iranian political figure who held positions such as Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the 1980s before he ran as a primary opposition leader in the 2009 Iranian presidential elections. "Where is my Vote?" became the slogan of the 'Green Movement' that gained speed in the aftermath of Mousavi's loss in the presidential campaign. Millions of protesters went out to the streets to call for a recount and ignited a violent confrontation with the Basij forces—under the Revolutionary Guard.

#### **Rahnavard, Dr Zahra**

Dr Rahnavard is a popular Iranian artist and politician. She served as political advisor under President Khatami and also served as the Chancellor of Alzahra University (1998–2006), becoming the first female chancellor of a university since the Islamic

Revolution in 1979. Along with her husband, Mir-Hossein Mousavi, and Mehdi Karroubi, she serves as one of the top leaders of the leading reformist opposition group, The Green Path of Hope. Rahnavard is also the author of 15 books.

### — IRAQ —

#### **Al-Sadr, Sheikh Muqtada**

The son of the late Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Sadiq Al-Sadr, Muqtada is a highly influential political leader who inherited control over large social institutions that served millions in the slums of Baghdad. He gained prominence after the US invasion of Iraq by creating the Mahdi Army, an armed insurgency movement that formed its own courts and system of law enforcement. Al-Sadr leads one of the largest parliament blocs, the Al-Sadr Bloc. Along with Grand Ayatollah Sistani he is one of the two most important Shi'a leaders in Iraq, and is believed to be dedicating his time studying at a seminary in Qom, Iran which will bolster his religious credentials.

#### **Dari, Harith**

Dari is the current leader of the Sunni Ulema Union, the largest association of Sunni Muslim scholars in Iraq. He is a key figure in the movement to expel foreign troops from Iraq.

### — ISRAEL —

#### **Salah, Sheikh Raed**

Raed Salah is the head of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel. He is widely respected in the Islamic World as a religious leader. From 1989 to 2001 Salah also served as the mayor of Umm Al-Fahm, an Israeli-Arab city. He has been arrested and imprisoned by the Israeli government on a number of occasions.

### — JORDAN —

#### **Abu Rashta, Ata**

Ata Abu Rashta is the global leader of the Islamic political party Hizb ut Tahrir. Having worked closely with the founder of Hizb ut Tahrir—Taqiuddin an Nabhani—Abu Rashta became prominent in Jordan during the Persian Gulf War when he contested the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; in 2003 he became the leader of the party. Hizb ut Tahrir is popular in the

Levant, the former Soviet Union, South and South East Asia, and Western Europe.

#### **Farhan, Ishaq**

Farhan is the leader of the Islamic Action Front (IAF). The IAF is the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan. Farhan is known as a moderate, and was an early advocate of the participation of women in the Brotherhood movement.

#### — LEBANON —

#### **Hariri, H.E. Saad Rafic**

Saad Rafic Hariri was the prime minister designate of Lebanon until the collapse of his cabinet on 12 January, 2011. He is a Lebanese businessman and the son of the late Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. Since his father's assassination in 2005 he has remained one of the most prominent political leaders in Lebanon.

#### — MOROCCO —

#### **Yassine, Nadia**

Nadia Yassine is the head of the women's branch of the most powerful Islamist movement in Morocco, Al-Adl Wa Al-Ihssane (Justice and Charity). She has traveled to Europe, promoting the mission of the movement to the Moroccan diaspora. She often serves as the movement's spokesperson.

#### — PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES —

#### **Haniyah, Ismail**

Haniyah is a senior political leader of Hamas and one of two disputed prime ministers of the Palestinian National Authority, a matter under political and legal dispute. After being dismissed by President Mahmoud Abbas, Haniyah continued to exercise prime ministerial authority in the Gaza Strip. Haniyah is a popular figure able to broaden the appeal of Hamas in Gazan politics.

#### **Nusseibeh, Sari**

Sari Nusseibeh is a Palestinian professor of philosophy and president of the Al-Quds University in Jerusalem. In 2008, Nusseibeh was voted the 24th in a list of Top 100 Public Intellectuals by Prospect Magazine (UK) and Foreign Policy (US). He recently wrote a popular article for Al-Jazeera website entitled 'Why Israel can't be a Jewish State'.

#### — SUDAN —

#### **Al-Bashir, H.E. President Omar**

Al-Bashir is the current president of Sudan and head of the National Congress Party. He came to power in a coup in 1989 and has since instituted elements of shari'a law throughout the country, including Christian and animist areas. Although the 20-year-old civil war ended in 2005, there are still tensions between the north and south of the country. The referendum to create a new nation in south Sudan was successful and the new nation declared its statehood on July 9, 2011.

#### **Al-Mahdi, H.E. Imam Sayyed Al-Sadiq**

Al-Mahdi is the president of the moderate Islamic Umma Party, and the imam of the Sufi order Al-Ansar. He was prime minister of Sudan until the government was overthrown and he was forced into exile. Al-Mahdi has now returned and is working to restore peace and democracy in the Sudan. He derives a significant portion of his authority from the fact that he descends from Muhammad Ahmad, who claimed to be the Mahdi, a prophesied figure that many Muslims believe will return to revive the Islamic faith.

#### — SYRIA —

#### **Al-Assad, Bashar**

Al-Assad is an Alawite Shi'a and president of the Syrian Arab Republic. Because of its strategic position in the Middle East, Syria is regarded as a major player in any peace agreement in the Middle East. The violent crackdowns on protests in 2011 have led to what is now a civil war. Claims of atrocities and misinformation abound on both sides.

#### — TUNISIA —

#### **Ghannushi, Rachid**

Ghannushi has influenced Tunisian politics since the 1980s when he founded the Renaissance Party. With the fall of President Ben Ali, Ghannushi returned to Tunisia in January 2011, after a 20 year exile. The Renaissance Party is an Islamic political party whose principles and ideals have been widely accepted by Tunisians. In the October 2011 elections, his party received 37% of the vote, winning 90 seats out of 217; the nearest rival won 30 seats.

— UNITED ARAB EMIRATES —

**Al-Maktoum, H.H. Amir Sheikh  
Mohammed bin Rashid**

Read bio on page page 100 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

**Al-Nahyan, H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed**  
Sheikh Khalifa Al-Nahyan is the president of one of the fastest-growing nations in the world. Under his leadership, the UAE has seen significant economic growth and the renaming of the Burj Dubai to Burj Khalifa is considered a symbol of Al-Nahyan's financial power. According to Forbes, Sheikh Khalifa is the world's third wealthiest monarch, with an estimated wealth of US\$19 billion. He has made substantial donations to many health institutions around the world, and finances a major housing programme in the Gaza Strip.

**Al-Qassimi, Sheikha Lubna**

Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid bin Sultan Al-Qassimi is the UAE's Minister for Foreign Trade, the first woman to hold a ministerial post in the UAE. She is seen as a role model for Gulf Arab women.

*Sub-Saharan Africa*

— CHAD —

**Deby Itno, H.E. President Idriss**

Deby is the president of Chad and the head of the Patriotic Salvation Movement. He took power in 1990, leading a predominantly Muslim army. Muslims make up around 55.7 percent of Chad's 11.4 million people. Deby holds great domestic authority through his ability to consolidate power in Chad. Chad was previously affected by a high frequency of coup d'états. He participated in the negotiated peace agreement in February 2010 between the rebel groups of the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudanese government.

— SOMALIA —

**Aweys, Sheikh Hassan Dahir**

Aweys is an influential Somali leader. He is a Salafi and the former head of the Shura Council of the Islamic Courts Union of Somalia. In April 2009 Aweys returned to Somalia and declared war on the African Peace Keeping Forces (AMISOM). Although marginalized from mainstream Somali politics, he

continues to enjoy significant support from the Al-Shabbab resistance movement in Somalia.

**Mohamud, Hassan Sheikh**

Mohamud, an ex-University professor and Dean, became the new Somalian President on September 10, 2011 by defeating former President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed 190 votes to 79 votes. He stayed in Somalia throughout the civil war, contributing to society with academic, charitable and political work. He inherits a host of problems, including how to tackle the Al-Shabaab militants.

*Asia*

— AFGHANISTAN —

**Haqqani, Sirajuddin**

Haqqani heads militant forces based in Waziristan, fighting against American and NATO forces in Afghanistan. His group is reportedly closely allied with Pakistani Taliban. He was one of the leaders on the Taliban's Quetta Shura.

**Hekmatyar, Gulbuddin**

Former prime minister of Afghanistan (1993–1994, 1996), Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is also founder of the Hezb-e-Islami political party that was founded as a mujahiddeen force against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Since then, it has continued fighting, first against other mujahiddeen forces, and more recently against foreign invaders.

**Karzai, H.E. President Hamid**

Hamid Karzai was elected as president of Afghanistan for a full five-year term in September 2004, becoming the first directly elected president in the country's history. He was then reelected to a subsequent five-year term in a controversial election in 2009. Karzai has been able to build up considerable support from the Afghans. Under his presidency Afghanistan's economy has been growing rapidly for the first time in many years. His administration does, however, suffer from widespread allegations of corruption. He also came to scrutiny when he announced the creation of a high peace council as part of the reconciliation effort to reintegrate some Taliban militants.

### **Omar, Mullah Muhammad**

Mullah Muhammad Omar is the reclusive leader of Afghanistan's Taliban. A prominent figure during Afghanistan's struggle against Soviet occupation, he is better known for his support of Osama bin Laden. He is believed to be directing the Taliban in their war against NATO and Afghanistan forces.

#### — AZERBAIJAN —

### **Aliyev, H.E. President Ilham**

Aliyev is the current president of Azerbaijan and the chairman of the New Azerbaijan Party. Although not outwardly religious, he is a Muslim and his advocacy of a moderate cultural Islam is representative of the demands of the population of the country. Azerbaijan, with a population of approximately 8.7 million Muslims is an active member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

#### — BANGLADESH —

### **Nizami, Motiur Rahman**

Leader of the third largest political party and the largest Islamic party in Bangladesh—Jamaat-e-Islamic—Motiur Rahman Nizami has played an active role in pushing the mission of the organization through political and social reforms and propagating Islamic educational initiatives.

### **Wazed, H.E. Sheikhha Hasina**

Sheikha Hasina Wazed is the current prime minister of Bangladesh and the president of one of Bangladesh's major political parties, the Awami League. Poverty alleviation has become a priority for one of the poorest but most populous Muslim countries in the world, under Wazed's leadership. Wazed is the daughter of Mujibur Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh.

#### — CHINA —

### **Kadeer, Rebiya**

Kadeer is the de facto leader of the movement for social justice for the 15-million-strong Uighur ethnic population of China. She was formerly a successful businesswoman and philanthropist in China but was imprisoned in 2000 for leaking state secrets and now lives in exile in the United States. Before her arrest, Kadeer was running the 1,000 Families Mothers' Project, which helped Uighur women start businesses. She now presides over both the

World Uighur Congress and the Uighur American Association. She is wellknown for her work in Europe and North America publicizing the plight of the Uighur ethnic group, and is partially responsible for raising the issue's status both in China and abroad. The Chinese government sees Kadeer as an agitator. She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

#### — INDONESIA —

### **Djalal, H.E. Dr Dino Patti**

Djalal is the presidential spokesperson for President Yudhoyono, and is also a diplomat, speech writer, youth activist, academic, and author of a national best seller. In 2010, he was appointed Indonesia's ambassador to the United States of America.

### **Sukarnoputri, Megawati**

Megawati Sukarnoputri was Indonesia's first female president, and the fourth woman to be the leader of a nation dominated mostly by Muslims. She is the current head of the opposition party, and despite losing two presidential elections [2004 and 2009], she remains a top contender for the next election [2014].

#### — MALAYSIA —

### **Ibrahim, H.E. Dr Anwar**

Read bio on page page 101 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

### **Mat, Dato' Haji Nick Abdul Aziz Nik**

Dato' Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat is a Malaysian politician, an Islamic scholar and has been the chief minister of the State of Kelantan for the past 20 years. He holds the position of Mursyidul Am—the religious guide—within the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS). As the religious guide of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, Nik Mat is the spiritual leader of Malaysian Islamic politics and holds very important sway over the tenor of politics in the nation. Nik Mat's fundamentalist party has close to one million members and enjoys strong support from the northern rural and conservative states such as Kelantan and Terengganu.

### **Mohammed, Dr. Mahathir**

Dr. Mahathir Mohammed was the Malaysian Prime minister for 22 years. He was the key figure behind the transition of the agricultural-based economy of Malaysia into a newly industrialized market econo-

my. He is noted for his support for liberal Muslim values and has established Islamic institutions such as the International Islamic University of Malaysia. Mahathir established the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission to focus on victims of abuse in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, and in May 2012, Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and their legal advisers Alberto Gonzales, David Addington, William Haynes, Jay Bybee and John Yoo were found guilty of war crimes.

#### **Razak, Najib Tun**

Razak became the 6th prime minister of Malaysia in 2009. He is focused on domestic economic issues and political reform, promotes economic liberalization, and has stated that Malaysia is led by Islamic principles and is not a secular state. Razak is also the president of the United Malays National Organization

#### **Shah, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam**

Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, age 84, was crowned King of Malaysia again in 2011. Malaysia uses a rotating system where the Kings of the nine states each take turns spending five years as the monarch, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. The Yang Di-Pertuan Agong is the constitutional monarch of Malaysia, with a population of 27.9 million. As King, he is also considered the Head of Islam in Malaysia, plus the nominal chief of the military.

### — MALDIVES —

#### **Nasheed, H.E. Mohamed**

As the president of the Maldives, Nasheed was one of the most environmentally conscious state leaders in the world. In the earliest stages of his political career, Nasheed was imprisoned for his criticism of his country's government and became an Amnesty Prisoner of Conscience. During his presidency, Nasheed has managed to make the Maldives carbon-neutral within a decade by moving the country's energy reliance to wind and solar power only. Time magazine named Nasheed #1 in the 'Leaders & Visionaries' category within its annual list of Heroes of the Environment in 2009. A critically-acclaimed documentary about his environmental initiatives, *The Island President*, was released in 2011. He resigned on February 7, 2012 under much controversy.

### — PAKISTAN —

#### **Fazlur Rahman, Maulana**

Maulana Fazlur Rahman is the Secretary General of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal coalition of religious parties in Pakistan's parliament. He is also the president of the Deobandi religio-political organization, Jamiat Ulema-Islam, or Assembly of Islamic Scholars. Rahman leads one of two main branches of the expansive organization which is a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. He is widely respected as a dedicated scholar of Islam and is a seasoned politician.

#### **Kayani, General Ashfaq**

Kayani is the Pakistani army's chief of staff. He has immense influence as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan's leading military figure. Kayani has particular influence currently as the country undergoes continued unrest with significant amounts of power in the hands of non-government-controlled militia, and the federal government finds ways to regain control. Kayani was named the 34th most powerful person in 2011 by Forbes Magazine.

#### **Khan, Imran**

A sportsman turned politician who is also a widely respected philanthropist, Khan founded and became the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice) party in 1996. He also served as a member of the National Assembly from 2002 to 2007, representing Mianwali. Khan has helped establish the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre and Mianwali's Namal College. In 2012, international polls showed him to be the people's choice for leading the country.

### — PHILIPPINES —

#### **Misuari, Nur**

Nur Misuari is a revolutionary leader of the Bangsamoro and began his campaign for better treatment of the people of Mindanao by the Manila government through the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) in the 1970s, which later became the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Under Misuari's leadership the MNLF challenged the government until the Tripoli Agreement was negotiated in 1976.

— SINGAPORE —

**Rasheed, H.E. Zainul Abidin**

Rasheed was a former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for Singapore and mayor of the North Eastern district of Singapore. Rasheed's activities have a focus on Singapore's diplomatic relations with the Muslim World, and also on sharing knowledge about Singapore's experience of intercultural and inter-religious relations with nations with substantial Muslim populations. Rasheed is widely known domestically, having held numerous positions of leadership throughout his career in journalism, organized labor and representing Singapore's large percentage of Muslims.

— TAJIKISTAN —

**Rahmon, H.E. Emomalii**

Rahmon has been the President of Tajikistan since 1994. He has done much to establish a distinct Tajik identity, and has called for closer ties with other Muslim nations in the region. He was listed on TIME Magazine's "Top 10 Autocrats in trouble".

— THAILAND —

**Pitsuwan, H.E. Dr Surin**

Pitsuwan is the secretary general of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and a former foreign minister of Thailand. He is an advocate for better relations with Muslims in South East Asia, speaking out against the marginalization of Muslim communities. ASEAN is one of the most important international organizations in the world, coordinating the economies and politics of some of the fastest-growing middle-income economies in the world. He joined the Rockefeller Foundation Board of Trustees.

— TURKMENISTAN —

**Berdimuhamedow, H.E. President  
Gurbanguly Mälikgulyýewiç**

Berdimuhamedow has been the president of Turkmenistan since 21 December, 2006. He is a moderate Muslim traditionalist who has sought to normalize life in Turkmenistan after the more unorthodox religious beliefs of his predecessor Niyazov. In the 2012 elections, he was re-elected with 97% of the vote.

*Europe*

— DENMARK —

**Khader, Nasser**

Khader is Denmark's leading Muslim politician. As a member of parliament, he has represented both the Social Liberal Party and the Liberal Alliance, the latter until 5 January, 2009 as founding leader. A leading proponent of the peaceful co-existence of democracy and Islam, he established a new movement, Moderate Muslims (later renamed Democratic Muslims), when the Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons controversy started.

— FRANCE —

**Bechari, Dr Mohammad**

Bechari, born in Morocco, is a leader and prolific and dynamic public figure in the landscape of European Islam. He is the president of the French National Federation of Muslims, one of the leading entities organizing Islam in France. He is also the secretary general of the Islamic European Conference, a Europe-wide umbrella organization that seeks to be a single organization representing European Muslims at a European level. Bechari is the founder of the Avicenna Institute in Lille and is the Vice President of the French Council of the Muslim Faith.

— KOSOVA —

**Thaçi, H.E. Prime Minister Hashim**

Thaçi was formerly a political leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). The KLA was the guerrilla group that fought against Serb forces in the late 1990s. Thaçi is the prime minister of the newly formed Kosovan national government. Kosovo itself is significant as an important cause for international Muslim solidarity, and is the most recently recognized Muslim-majority country in the world.

— RUSSIA —

**Kadyrov, H.E. President Ramzan**

President of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov is the son of former president, rebel leader and Mufti Akhmad Kadyrov. He maintains an iron grip on Chechnya's government and institutions.

**Minnikhanov, H.E. President Dr Rustam**

Dr Minnikhanov is the newly-elected president of the Republic of Tatarstan of the Russian Federation. Tatarstan is an affluent region in the center of Russia, and its religious culture has been lauded as a model of the combination of Islam and European culture. President Minnikhanov is the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Tatarstan, and was nominated for the presidency by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

— TURKEY —

**Davutoglu, H.E. Ahmet**

Read bio on page page 101 in ‘Honorable Mentions’.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Ahmed, Lord Nazir**

Nazir Ahmed is the first Muslim member of the House of Lords, the upper chamber of the United Kingdom’s bicameral parliament. Membership is for life, and underlines the respect and trust he enjoys in the British establishment. Ahmed has worked on issues relating to Islam and Britain’s Muslim community. He also works internationally to promote dialogue and freedom of religion.

**Warsi, Lady Sayeeda**

Warsi is the most senior Muslim in the Conservative Party. She is Minister of State for Faith and Communities and Senior Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. On 4 September 2012, she was appointed as a minister in the Foreign Office. From May 2010 to September 2012 she was the Co-Chairman of the Conservative Party, and a Minister without Portfolio in David Cameron’s Cabinet. She was the third Muslim minister and the first female Muslim to serve as a minister in the UK.

*North America*

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— UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

**Carson, Andre**

Andre Carson is one of only two Muslims [the other being Keith Ellison] serving in the US Congress. He was elected to Congress in 2008, and then re-elected in 2010. He helped pass the health care reform

and works to improve the lives of working families in Indianapolis.

**Ellison, Representative Keith**

Keith Ellison is the first Muslim to serve in the US Congress. He is serving his second term in the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota in the United States House of Representatives and also serves on the Financial Services and Foreign Affairs Committees. Representative Ellison has been an outspoken advocate for American Muslims and his trips to the Muslim World, such as a visit to Palestine in the aftermath of the Israeli attacks in 2009, have garnered international support for his outreach to the Muslim World.

**Hussain, Rashad**

Rashad Hussain is the first Indian-American to be appointed Deputy Associate Counsel to the president; he was appointed by President Obama. He is a former trial attorney at the US Department of Justice, a former legislative assistant to the House Judiciary Committee, and a former editor of the Yale Law Journal. Hussain was subsequently named the US envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, in March 2010. He is lauded for his balance of secular and religious leadership as a young Muslim lawyer and hafiz (one who has memorized the entire Qur’an), playing a key role in advising the American President on US-Muslim world affairs.

# ADMINISTRATION OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — ALGERIA —

#### **Ghلامallah, H.E. Bouabdellah**

Ghلامallah is Algeria's long-standing Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, a position he has held since the election of current President Bouteflika in 1999. He previously held high level positions in the Ministry of Education throughout the 1980s and 1990s where he went from focusing on basic education to the organization of Qur'anic schools and religious education. Ghلامallah maintains a strong commitment to France's Algerian Muslim community.

### — EGYPT —

#### **Al-Husseini, Dr Abd Allah**

Dr Abd Allah Al-Husseini was appointed to the Presidency of the Al-Azhar University upon the resignation of Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb in March 2010. Al-Husseini is formerly the Vice President for educational and student affairs at Al-Azhar.

#### **El-Araby, H.E. Nabil**

Nabil el-Araby is an Egyptian diplomat who is currently the Secretary-General of the Arab League. He has previously held the post of Foreign Minister of Egypt as well as working in many well esteemed positions in the United Nations.

### — IRAN —

#### **Vaez-Tabasi, H.E. Ayatollah Abbas**

Vaez-Tabasi is at the head of Iran's single richest institution, the Holy Estate of Imam Reza. The Holy Estate owns hundreds of companies and resources. Its revenue is supplemented by the donations of the millions of pilgrims that make the journey to Mashhad, where Imam Reza (the eighth of the Twelver Imams) is buried.

### — MOROCCO —

#### **Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad**

Al-Tawfiq is the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs in Morocco. He is a strong supporter of sufi groups. He is a writer for the Moroccan Association for authorship, publications and translation as well as the Vice President of the Moroccan institution for historical research. Al-Tawfiq is an advocate of interfaith dialogue and is currently on the on the Board of World Religious Leaders for The Elijah Interfaith Institute.

#### **Modghari, H.E. Dr Abd Al-Kabir**

Modghari is the director of the Casablanca-based Bayt Mal Al-Quds agency of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which is devoted to safeguarding the city of Jerusalem and its religious, architectural and cultural heritage, and also providing development assistance to the Palestinian population and their institutions. Modghari was a former long-term Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco representing the late King Hassan II.

### — PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES —

#### **Sabri, H.E. Sheikh Dr Ikrima Sa'id**

Sabri is head of the Supreme Islamic Council, and a former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and all of Palestine. He remains an Imam of the Blessed Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, preaching there regularly. Sabri is an important figure who is well-respected by many in Palestine for his forthright views on Israel.

### — SAUDI ARABIA —

#### **Al-Arifi, Muhammad**

Dr Al-Arifi is a well-known scholar and lecturer from Saudi Arabia. He is a founding and honorary member of various Da'wah organisations, as well as being a member of their advisory committees. He is also a professor in King Saud University of Riyadh. He takes a special interest in Hadith literature and has received licenses for the chains of transmission for various Hadith texts from a number of scholars.

### — SUDAN —

#### **El Bashir, H.E. Dr Issam**

El Bashir is the secretary general of the International Moderation Centre (IMC) in Kuwait. The IMC is an organization set up by the Higher Committee for

the Promotion of Moderation of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs; its aim is to promote Islamic moderation domestically and around the world. The center has worked with communities in Britain and Russia, among other places, to promote moderation among the extremist elements of their Muslim population. Locally it trains over 700 imams at a time with a focus on practices of moderation.

— UNITED ARAB EMIRATES —

**Al-Haddad, Dr Ahmed**

Dr Ahmed Al-Haddad is the Grand Mufti of Dubai and director of the Dubai Fatwa Administration with the Department of Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities. In late 2009 Dr Al-Haddad announced the start of a program designed to develop a cadre of fully-trained and certified female muftis who will be able to issue fatwas and be recognized as leading Islamic scholars alongside their male counterparts. This is considered to be the first deliberate attempt at including women at the highest levels of Islamic scholarship in Dubai, and presents the possibility of a female Grand Mufti in the future.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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— CHAD —

**Abakar, Sheikh Hussain Hassan**

Sheikh Hussain Hassan Abakar is the Imam of the Muslims of Chad and the chairman of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in Chad. He is also a founding member of the Muslim World League (MWL). Abakar oversees the activities of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in implementing educational and cultural programs through Islamic schools, educational books and training courses for imams. He has been important in fundraising for the education of Muslims in Chad.

— KENYA —

**Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed**

Khalifa is the organizing secretary of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya, he is also the head of the as yet unregistered Islamic Party of Kenya. Relations between the Muslim population of Kenya and the broader society, especially the government, have

frayed recently with the instances of demonizing Muslims as terrorists. There is widespread displeasure among the coastal Muslim population with the national government.

— MOZAMBIQUE —

**Cheba, Sheikh Muhamad Aboulai**

Cheba is the provincial director of 139 registered madrasahs (Islamic schools), where pupils start learning about HIV/AIDS as early as six years of age. He raises awareness that the disease is not a divine punishment, and sees mosques as the perfect place for the dissemination of such knowledge. HIV/AIDS affects roughly 15 percent of the adult population of Mozambique.

— NIGERIA —

**Adegbite, Dr Lateef**

Dr Lateef Adegbite was appointed Secretary-General of the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) in 1988. A lawyer by training, he has held various governmental posts as well as being active in Muslim organisations since his student days.

**Ajibola, H.E. Prince Bola**

Prince Bola Ajibola is the former head of the Nigerian High Commission in London and the president and founder of the Islamic Movement for Africa. He also served as the vice chairman of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague between 1991 and 1994. In 1994 Prince Ajibola was appointed Judge ad-hoc to the Permanent Court of International Arbitration, with respect to the court's deliberations on the land dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon. He also served as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice in Nigeria. Most recently he founded the Crescent University, in Abeokuta, Nigeria.

**Mohamed, Imam Ustaz Musa**

Imam Mohamed is the chief imam of the Abuja National Mosque in Nigeria. As the leading imam of the national mosque of Nigeria, Imam Mohamed is often the spokesperson for Islamic religious affairs in the country.

— SOUTH AFRICA —

**Hendricks, Maulana Igsaan**

Hendricks is the president of the Muslim Judi-

cial Council of Cape Town. The Muslim Judicial Council is one of the central Islamic organizations in South Africa, doing educational work as well as social work for the Muslim community. The organization runs the International Peace University of South Africa (IPSA), and oversees the administration of Cape Town's Al-Azhar Institute.

— ZIMBABWE —

**Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa**

Mufti Ismail Musa Menk is the director of the Daarul Ilm (Islamic Educational Centre) of the Majlisul Ulama. The Majlisul Ulama Zimbabwe is an Islamic welfare organization which caters to the needs of the Muslim population of Zimbabwe, especially in terms of Islamic education. Menk is a noted scholar in eastern Africa and also lectures internationally.

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*Asia*

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— BANGLADESH —

**Rahman, Mohammad Fazlur**

Rahman is the leader of the Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. The Islamic Foundation is a quasi-governmental organization working under the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Bangladesh. Its chief aims are educational, and organizational, researching, publishing, offering scholarships and also providing funding to maintain mosques. The head office of the Islamic Foundation is in Dhaka, and is supported by six regional offices and 58 district offices. The organization runs seven imam training centers and 29 centers for da'wa.

— CAMBODIA —

**Adam, H.E. Zakaryya**

H.E. Zakaryya Adam is a member of the Cambodian parliament, and serves as a member of the Commission on Education, Youth, Sport, Religious Affairs, Culture and Tourism. Previously, he held the position of secretary of state in the Ministry of Cult and Religion. In addition to his government service, he serves as Vice President of the Highest Council for Islamic Religious Affairs, as the Vice President of the Cambodian Muslim Development Foundation (CMDF), general secretary for the Cambodian

Islamic Center (CIC), and as a director of Cambodian Islamic Voice Radio. Adam has translated the Qur'an, as well as other Islamic books, from Arabic into the Khmer language for Cambodian readers; he has also written a Melayu-Khmer dictionary.

— CHINA —

**Guangyuan, Imam Chen Chen**

Guangyuan is the Grand Imam of China as well as the president of the Islamic Association of China and the president of the Chinese-Islamic Institute. He has a very important position, with China's roughly 23 million Muslims coming almost exclusively from minority groups. Guangyuan has also recently spoken out in opposition to violence against Uighurs.

— INDIA —

**Ahmad, Sheikh Aboobackar**

Shaikh Aboobackar Ahmad is the General Secretary of the All India Muslim Scholars Association and founder and Vice Chancellor of Jamia Markazu Ssaquafathi Sunniyya (Sunni Cultural Centre), Karanthur, Kozhikode, Kerala. He is also chief patron of the Sunni Youth Society and General Secretary, Jamiat Ulema (Kerala). He was awarded with the "Shaik Muhiyudheen Abdul Khadar Jeelani Award" in 2009.

**Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibrahimul Khaleel**

Sayyid Ibrahimul Khaleel Al-Bukhari has founded and directed numerous educational and charity initiatives in India over the past 25 years. His Ma'din Islamic Academy has grown into a mass movement with 25 educational institutions and has participated in international interfaith celebrations.

— INDONESIA —

**Hidayat, Nurwahid**

A former parliament president, Hidayat Nurwahid, is now the chair of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) at the House of Representatives. The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) is looking to reclaim its past glory in the capital. It used to be the most powerful political party in the city of around 10 million people, garnering support from 23 percent of the votes in the 2004 legislative elections, before losing the council's majority to the Democratic Party in 2009.

### **Mahfudz, Sahal**

Mahfudz was re-elected as chief of the consultative body (syuriah) of the Nahdlatul Ulama in March 2010, this is his third term since 1999. Since 2000 he has been the head the Indonesia Ulema Council, which comprises both Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's most influential Islamic organizations. The Ulama Council grants halal food certification and also actively produces fatwas. Besides being a Dean of Nahdlatul Ulama Institute, Jepara, Sahal also manages Maslakul Huda, a Pesantren that actively supports the economic development of the surrounding neighborhood through its microfinance program.

### **Umar, Dr Nasaruddin**

Nasaruddin is the director general of religious guidance at the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. He is also a rector at the Institute for Advanced Qur'anic Studies in Indonesia and secretary general of the Nahdhatul Ulama Consultative Council.

### — MALDIVES —

### **Saeed, Mohamed Shaheem Ali**

Saeed is the minister of state for Islamic Affairs for the Republic of Maldives. His knowledge of Islam has provided good leadership to his ministry, especially in the drafting of regulations under the Religious Unity Act of the Maldives which, he believes, would provide a legal framework to protect Islam. Saeed is also collaborating with the Maldives National Broadcasting Corporation to introduce a new television channel which would focus on relating Islam to the broader issues of society. He was a member of the World Islamic People's Leadership and the Islamic Fiqh Academy in the Maldives and has advocated for a study regarding comparative religion.

### — PAKISTAN —

### **Siddiqui, Dr Anwar Hussain**

Siddiqui is the president of the International Islamic University in Islamabad, a school aiming to produce scholars and practitioners able to use their Islamic learning to meet the economic, social, political, and intellectual needs of the ummah.

### **Hasan, Syed Munawar**

Syed Munawar Hasan is the current Emir of the Jamaat-e-Islami-e-Pakistan (JIP), one of the most

powerful religious parties in Pakistan. Founded by Syed Abul Ala Maududi in 1941, the JIP has gained a strong foothold with many middle-class Pakistanis.

### — PHILIPPINES —

### **Guiopal, Aleem Siddiqui**

Guiopal is the project director of the Young Moro Professional Network (YMPN). This organization is made up of 200 Muslim scholars, students and professionals who are all using their unique skills to alleviate the plight of marginalized Muslim communities.

### — SRI LANKA —

### **Mufthi, M.I.M. Rizvi**

M.I.M. Rizvi Mufthi is the head of All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU), an organization that plays an active role as the Islamic religious higher authority of Sri Lanka with 3,000 active members under its 22 districts and 15 divisional branches. ACJU has recently established a Halal Certification Authority in Sri Lanka and also publishes a quarterly 'Halal Guide' which lists the organisations/ products that are certified as Halal by the authority. One of the pioneering scholars in the field of Islamic banking and finance, Mufthi is a member of the sharia advisory councils for a number of Islamic financial institutions in Sri Lanka.

### — UZBEKISTAN —

### **Alemov, H.E. Usman**

Alemov has been the chief mufti of Uzbekistan since 2006. He is respected for his moderate stance and proven record in coping with extremists in the Samarkand region where he was formerly a mufti. Alemov was instrumental in making Tashkent the ISESCO Capital of Islamic Culture for 2007.

## *Europe*

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### — ALBANIA —

### **Koci, Hafiz Sabri**

Hafiz Sabri Koci is chairman of the Albanian Islamic Community, which is the country's ruling Islamic body. He spent 27 years in a prison labour camp under the communist rule during which he

authored many books about Islam. These works were so inspiring that he was elected as leader of Albanian Muslims after his release.

— AUSTRIA —

**Shakfeh, Anas**

Shakfeh is the head of the Islamic Faith Community in Austria (IGGIO). He has been its president for around a decade, building a close relationship with the Austrian state on community integration. Shakfeh also leads the Islamic Education Authority. In 2008 he was decorated for his services to the Republic of Austria by President Heinz Fischer.

— BULGARIA —

**Hadzhi, H.E. Mustafa Alish**

Hadzhi is Bulgaria's chief mufti. Bulgaria has recently been referred to as 'Istanbulgaria' because of the importance of Turkish- Bulgarian relations. Hadzhi is important as the leader of the Muslim community in a predominantly Christian state with a large influx of Muslims. He has recently had to defend his community from extreme nationalists who went so far as to attack mosques and worshippers.

— FRANCE —

**Moussaoui, Mohammed**

Moussaoui is the President of the French Council on Muslim Faith. The CFCM was established in 2003 by then Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy to be the 'official' representative body of the French Muslim community. Council members are directly elected by French Muslims.

— GERMANY —

**Köhler, Ayyub Axel**

Köhler is chairman of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany. Ayyub Axel Köhler has numerous articles primarily in Islamic magazines such as 'Al Islam' of the Islamic Center of Munich, and 'Al Fajr' of the Islamic Center of Hamburg and has published newsletters for the Muslim League in which he is mostly concerned with the integration of Islamic ways of life into German society.

— ITALY —

**Pallavicini, Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe**

Pallavicini is an important figure in the religious life of Italian Muslims as well as in European relations with the Muslim World. He is Vice President of CO.RE.IS (Comunità Religiosa Islamica; the Islamic Religious Community), Italy, the chairman of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West, and an advisor for Islamic affairs to the Italian Minister of Interior. Pallavicini is also the imam of the Al-Wahid Mosque of Milan in Via Meda, where he organizes the training of imams in Italian. His father is Abd Al-Wahid Pallavicini, the noted preacher and head of the Ahamadiyyah Idrissiyyah Shadhiliyyah brotherhood in Italy.

— KOSOVO —

**Trnava, H.E. Sheikh Naim**

Naim Trnava is the Grand Mufti of Kosovo. He is the leading religious figure in Kosovo, which emerged after an ethno-religious war that caused widespread loss of life and destruction. Trnava is a key figure in the attempts of the country's Muslim population to overcome the horrors of war. He was instrumental in the creation of the Inter-Religious Council Organization for Interfaith Relations.

— PORTUGAL —

**Vakil, Abdool Magid Abdool Karim**

Abdool Magid Abdool Karim Vakil is the founder and president of the Islamic Community (Comunidade Islâmica de Lisboa), the co-founder and president of the Abrahamic Forum of Portugal (Forum Abraâmico de Portugal) and a member of the Committee for Religious Freedom of the Ministry of Justice of Portugal. He is one of the leading economists from the region and has received several awards for his work from the Portuguese government.

— RUSSIA —

**Nasibullahoglu, Mufti Cafer**

Cafer Nasibullahoglu is the imam of the St Petersburg Mosque. He is also the mufti of St Petersburg, which is home to approximately 700 thousand Muslims. His diverse congregation consists of Muslims of Tatar, Kazakh, Uzbek, Tajik, and Arab origin, among others, and the sermon at St Petersburg mosque is often conducted in Arabic, Tatar, and Russian.

— SWITZERLAND —

**Maizar, Hisham**

Hisham Maizar is president of the Federation of Islamic Organizations of Switzerland. The FIOS was established as an umbrella organization for Islamic movements in Switzerland and has member organizations representing over 100 ethnic groups including Swiss, Albanians, Arabs, Bosnians, Turks, and Africans. Switzerland has as many as 400,000 Muslims and is considered to have some of the most anti-Islamic sentiments in Europe.

— TURKEY —

**Bardakoglu, Prof. Dr Ali**

Ali Bardakoglu is the president of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey (Diyaret). He is a moderate Islamic leader who supports interfaith initiatives and in 2005 appointed two women to the position of vice mufti. The Presidency of Religious Affairs has significant influence over the activities of religious associations and places of worship in the country. He is former professor of Islamic law at the University of Marmara.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Ahsan, Dr Manazir**

Ahsan is the director general of the Islamic Foundation, Leicester. The Islamic Foundation is one of the oldest centers working for integration and understanding of Islam in the UK. It has many publications and offers many courses.

**Nahdi, Fuad**

Fuad Nahdi is the director of The Radical Middle Way, a UK-based Muslim initiative set up to promote youth activism, authentic Islamic scholarship and education and the development of a distinct British Muslim identity.

## *Oceania*

— NEW ZEALAND —

**Ghani, Dr Anwar**

Ghani is president of the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ). His work leading FIANZ has been considerable; building bridges with the government as well as with the broader New Zealand population and leaders of other faiths.

## *North America*

— CANADA —

**Valiante, Wahida**

A social worker and therapist by profession, Wahida Valiante is a founding member, and currently, the president of the Canadian Islamic Congress. The CIC is made up of 24 organizations and the CIC's newsletter has 300,000 subscribers worldwide. She is a published author of books on theories of family therapy and community issues. She is an outspoken advocate of the rights of Canadian Muslims and also serves as the chair of the Islamic History Month in Canada.

— UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

**Crane, Dr. Robert Dickson**

An American Muslim activist since the early 80's, Dr Crane is the former adviser to the late President of the United States Richard Nixon. Dr. Crane was Director of Da'wa at the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., and served as director of publication in the International Institute of Islamic Thought. From the early 90's, he headed his own Center for Policy Research and was a board member of the United Association for Studies and Research, as well as being a Managing Editor of its Middle East Affairs Journal. He has more than a dozen books which he has authored or co-authored. Dr. Robert Crane is currently director of the recently created Center for the Study of contemporary Muslim Societies in Doha, Qatar.

**Ghazi, Drs. Abidullah and Tasneema**

Dr Abidullah Ghazi, a prominent writer, speaker and poet is cofounder of the IQRA' International Educational Foundation with his wife Dr Tasneema Ghazi. IQRA' is a non-profit organization that creates Islamic studies textbooks and educational materials especially for children. The institution has produced a complete system of Islamic education for part and full time schools and a comprehensive madrasah integrated program for the Singapore madrasah system. IQRA's programs and educational materials are used in the United States, and worldwide.

**Hendi, Imam Yahya**

A strong interfaith dialog activist, seeking to bring the three Abrahamic religions closer together by focusing on the commonalities instead of the dif-

ferences, Imam Hendi is the founder and president of the non-profit organization Clergy Beyond Borders, Human Rights Dialogue and the Islamic Society of Frederick. His efforts over the past 14 years not just in interfaith but also in issues such as eliminating poverty, fighting terrorism, drugs and violence in America, and environmental responsibility have garnered him numerous awards.

#### **Magid, Imam Mohamed**

Imam Magid is the executive director and imam at the ADAMS Center in Virginia. He is an advocate for youth and women, is the president of ISNA, and serves on the FBI's Muslim, Sikh, and Arab Advisory Committee. Imam Magid was among the ten 'Washingtonians of the year' in 2010 who were awarded the Washingtonian Magazine's award for outstanding leadership, in particular for his efforts toward interfaith bridge-building. He has served as an advisor to many in Washington, including President Obama.

## *Caribbean*

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#### — JAMAICA —

#### **Muhammad, Mustafa**

Muhammad is a spokesperson for the Muslim population of Jamaica and has been the president of the Islamic Council of Jamaica for the past 14 years. His work involves education and halal certification. He oversees the eleven mosques in Jamaica that are attended regularly by an estimated 5,000 Muslims.

#### — TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO —

#### **Ali, Imam Yacoob**

Ali is the president of the largest and most influential Muslim organization in Trinidad and Tobago, the Anjuman Sunnat ul Jamaat Association (ASJA) which was founded in 1936. Ali's organization runs numerous schools and focuses on the importance of education for Muslim youth.

## *South America*

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#### — ARGENTINA —

#### **Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf**

Hallar is an active figure in Argentina involved in community development for Muslims. He has conducted comprehensive research on Muslims in Latin America and holds a number of positions including secretary general of the Islamic Organization of Latin America and the director of the Office of Islamic Culture and is a member of the Expert Committee on Minority Rights for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

#### — ECUADOR —

#### **Suquillo, Juan**

Suquillo is an imam and the director and co-founder of the Islamic Centre of Ecuador. He has received awards in recognition of his services to the nation, and has translated many books into Spanish. These have become very popular since the 9/11 attacks when non-Muslims became interested in learning about Islam. Suquillo's books have become bestsellers since then. He is very well respected, especially by South American Muslim scholars.

# PREACHERS & SPIRITUAL GUIDES

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — ALGERIA —

#### **Al-Khair, Shaykh Abdul-Nacer**

Shaykh Abdul-Nacer is a master of the Shadhili tariqah and has a wide following in his native Algeria, as well as Egypt, Malaysia and various countries in Europe. He is a descendant of the famous Sufi Sayyid, Abdul Salam Mashish.

#### **Belkaid, Shaykh Abdellatif**

Shaykh Abdellatif is well-known in Algeria, Egypt and Europe as a spiritual teacher who inherited the spiritual gifts of his father. His students include many in high positions in the Algerian government, and also included the famous Egyptian scholar, Shaykh Sha'rawi before the latter's death.

### — EGYPT —

#### **Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar**

Abdelkafy is an Egyptian preacher and da'wa practitioner. He is very well-respected by his peers as a Hafiz of the Qur'an (one who has memorized the entire Qur'an). He is also the director of the Qur'anic Studies Centre at the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award. As well as working in his native Egypt, he travels abroad to help Muslim communities, working specifically with the Muslim community in Canada.

#### **Masoud, Moez**

Read bio on page page 100 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

### — IRAQ —

#### **Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmed**

Kubaisi is a very popular Sunni cleric and preacher in Iraq, who preaches for the end of foreign occupation in Iraq and the institution of an Islamic state. To this end he is a spokesperson of the Sunni Ulema Council, an important association of Sunni Muslim scholars in Iraq. Kubaisi leads prayers that are

televised worldwide from the state mosque of Abu Dhabi.

### — JORDAN —

#### **Keller, Sheikh Nuh**

Sheikh Nuh Keller holds the distinction of translating the first Islamic legal work in a European language to receive certification from Al-Azhar University. He also possesses a number of ijazas in various disciplines, most notably as an authorized sheikh of the Shadhiliya sufi order and teaches students from his zawiyah in Jordan as well as at annual gatherings all over the world. In May 2011 he published his latest book, *Sea Without Shore*, an extensive modern manual on Sufism written in English.

### — MOROCCO —

#### **Al-Boutchich, Sidi Hamza Al-Qadiri**

The Tariqa (Path to God) under the leadership of Sidi Hamza Al-Qadiri Boutchich has attracted disciples from all over the world, but especially from Europe. The Bouchichiya Tariqa was founded by his grandfather who organized armed resistance against the French occupation of Morocco.

#### **Al-Fasi, Mulana Idriss**

Idriss Al-Fasi is the Imam of the oldest univeristy in the world, the Qarawiyyin in Fes. He is also head of the Islamic Theology department as well as being a professor in the faculty of Shari'a. He is renowned for his profound and cheerful method of teaching.

### — PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES —

#### **Al-Rifa'i, Shaykh Muhammad Said al-Jamal**

Sheikh Al-Rifa'i is a guide of the Shadhiliyya Path, founded by Sheikh Ali Abu-l-Hasan as-Shadhili in Egypt in the thirteenth century. In 1997 he restored the 1,000 year old Sufi Council in the Holy Land and became head of the Council. He is a teacher and central figure at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the three holiest sites in Islam. The Sheikh has students and followers not only in the Holy Land but in America and Europe also.

### — QATAR —

#### **Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal**

A notable convert and Islamic scholar, Philips is founder of the virtual educational institution Islam-

ic Online University and Discover Islam, an Islamic center based in Dubai. He reaches mass Muslim audiences through his television appearances on Indiabased satellite channel, Peace TV.

— SAUDI ARABIA —

**Al Qarni, Dr Aaidh**

Dr Aaidh Al Qarni is a prominent Saudi scholar, author, and activist preacher, best known for his popular self-help book *Don't Be Sad*. Dr Al Qarni has garnered a substantial following through a preaching career which spans various modes of broadcast media from audio lectures to a comprehensive website, *alislamnet.com*. He lectures at mosques, colleges, and Islamic institutions and hosts a popular weekly television show. He was found guilty of plagiarism in 2012 and has since lost some of his standing.

**Al-Shugairi, Ahmad**

Al-Shugairi is a televangelist with a huge following around the world. He is at the forefront of a religious revivalist movement that is affecting young people across the Middle East. In addition to his work as a television host, Al-Shugairi is the founder of the youth-centric coffee shop, *Andalus Cafe*. With no formal Islamic training and an MBA, his popularity comes from repackaging a balanced understanding of Islam for his throngs of fans of all ages. He has almost 1 million fans on Facebook and was listed amongst the *Worlds 500* most influential Arabs by *Arabian Business* 2012.

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*Sub-Saharan Africa*

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— NIGERIA —

**Bayero, H.R.H. Amir Al-Haji Dr Ado**

H.R.H. Ado Bayero is the current Amir of Kano. The Amir is the traditional ruler of the Nigerian city of Kano, which is the capital of Kano State. Bayero is a popular leader amongst a wide variety of Nigerian Muslims. He is an influential Tijani sheikh, with lineage back to the prominent Fulani jihadist and religious reformer Osman Dan Fodio. HRH Ado Bayero is regarded as a wise counselor both at home and abroad because of his experience and ability to mediate between cultures. This makes him an important asset in promoting mutual understanding

and resolving conflicts between different ethnic and religious groups.

**Katsina, Sheikh Yakubu Musa**

Sheikh Yakubu Musa Katsina is a popular preacher in Nigeria. He is also the leader of the Izala revivalist sect in Katsina. The Izala, or *Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah* (Movement Against Negative Innovations and for Orthodoxy) is an activist Sufi brotherhood which calls for a return to the practices of the Prophet Muhammad and a true practice of Islam. Hailing from Katsina, the predominantly Muslim city in northern Nigeria, Sheikh Katsina is outspoken against corruption in the country.

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*Asia*

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— INDIA —

**Azmi, H.E. Hazrat Allama**

**Maulana Qamaruzzaman**

Maulana Azmi is the Khalifa of Imam Ahmed Raza Khan Bareilvi's son. He is a prolific speaker and according to the *Times of India*, has millions of followers all over the world. At the age of 18 he established the Islamic university, *Al-Jame'atul-Islamia*, which is currently recognized as one of India's top Islamic universities. He has for over 50 years been building many organizations and institutions, mosques, colleges and universities all over the world.

**Saheb, H.H. Dr Syedna Mohammad Burhannuddin**

Read bio on page page 102 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

**Naik, Dr Zakir Abdul Karim**

Read bio on page page 102 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

**Qaudri, Professor Sayid Ameen Mian**

Professor Sayid Ameen Mian Qaudri is leader of the Indian Bareilwis and a *sajjada nashin*, or Sufi disciple of the *Barkatiya* Sufi tradition which stems from the *Qadiriyyah* tradition of eminent Sufi master, 'Abd Al-Qadir Al-Jilani (1077-1166 CE). Qaudri is also a professor of Urdu at India's esteemed *Aligarh Muslim University*.

**Alawiyaah, Prof. Dr Tuti**

Alawiyaah was the Indonesian Minister of Women's Empowerment in President Suharto's last cabinet. Alawiyaah is currently the dean of one of Indonesia's oldest and most prominent Islamic educational institutions, the As Syafi'iyah University. She is a prolific preacher and broadens her reach through her regular television appearances on almost all Indonesian television channels.

**Gymnastiar, Abdullah 'Aa Gym**

Abdullah Gymnastiar, more commonly known as Aa Gym (Elder Brother), is Indonesia's most popular preacher. With his style of modern, youthful, enjoyable preaching he has built a substantial following and a media empire. He maintains a regular audience of over 80 million Indonesians with an approval rating of close to 90 percent. Gymnastiar is both preacher and performer; he is an attractive and charismatic young man, he makes jokes, tells stories and then sings nasheed (religious songs) accompanied by lights, dry ice, and a band.

**Shihab, Quraish**

Quraish Shihab is an Indonesian expert on Qur'anic exegesis who regularly preaches on national television. He is noted as a progressive scholar who teaches Qur'anic exegesis using actual context and simple language. He is an author of many Islamic books, including 'Tafsir Al-Misbah'. He served as Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs in 1998 and also as chairman of the Indonesian Ulama Council since 1984. Shihab was also a director of State Islamic University, Syarif Hidayatullah 1992–1998.

**Ibrahim, Dato Mashitah**

Ibrahim is a prominent motivational preacher in Malaysia, and a lecturer at University Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia, who is now active in politics. Sultan Pahang awarded her with the honorary title 'dato' for her devotion to da'wa initiatives in 2000. Her views and opinions on contemporary Islamic issues receive wide attention.

**Akhtar, Dr Ahmad Rafique**

A university professor for many years, Dr Rafique has now dedicated himself to giving lectures on various aspects of Islam. He is particularly popular in middle-upper class circles.

**Akhtar, Hazrat Maulana Shah  
Hakeem Muhammad**

Maulana Shah Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar is a Sufi scholar of the Ashrafia order based in Karachi. He has authored numerous books on Islamic spirituality including a popular commentary on the Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi. Akhtar attracts a vast audience at his spiritual center or khanqah for islah-e-nafs (self-correction) and online, where his talks are broadcast live daily.

**Qadiri, Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar**

Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri is a leader of the Qadiriyyah, Radaviyyah, Attariya branch of the Qadiriyyah Sufi order. He is also the founder of Dawat-e-Islami, a Sunni Bareilwi revivalist movement centering on the propagation of Islamic knowledge. Qadiri is a widely-respected sheikh with a significant global following.

**Sahab, Maulana Tariq Jameel**

Tariq Jamil is a prominent Islamic scholar who is also one of the most popular preachers in Pakistan. He belongs to the Tablighi Jamaat group and his lectures focus on the subject of self-purification, avoidance of violence, observance of Allah's orders and to pursue the way of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He has been very effective in influencing all types of the community ranging from businessmen and landlords to ministers and sports celebrities.

**Shaikh, Mohammad**

As the founder of the International Islamic Propagation Center (IIPC) (a da'wa organization based in Karachi), Mohammad Shaikh is well-known as an influential public speaker. He has given numerous lectures on the Qur'an and also founded the English language IIPC TV channel which broadcasts to viewers across the globe. He was ranked 4th most influential Muslim in the world on a public poll by Reuters in 2009.

## Europe

### — ITALY —

#### **Pallavicini, Sheikh Abd Al-Wahid**

Sheikh Abd Al-Wahid Pallavicini is a noted preacher from Milan, Italy. After converting to Islam in 1951, he joined the Ahamadiyyah Idrissiyyah Shadhiliyyah Sufi order and is now head of the brotherhood in Italy. His son is Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini, the chairman of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West and imam of the Al-Wahid Mosque of Milan.

### — TURKEY —

#### **Effendi, Sheikh Mahmud**

Read bio on page page 101 in ‘Honorable Mentions’.

### — UNITED KINGDOM —

#### **Siddiqui, Khwaja Pir Mohammad Alauddin**

Khwaja Pir Mohammad Alauddin Siddiqui is a shaykh of the Naqshbandi tareeqa. He was born in Azad Kashmir on 1st January 1938, and spent his early life studying with traditional scholars, including his father. In the late 70’s, and early 80’s he began travelling to the UK to support the Muslim community there. He has since established various charitable, religious, educational and media institutions such as: the Al-Ehya Trust, now known as Mohiuddin Trust, Mohiuddin International Girls College, and Noor TV.

#### **As-Sufi, Sheikh Abd Al-Qadir**

Sheikh as-Sufi is the founder of the Murabitun World Movement. Born Ian Dallas in Scotland, As-Sufi converted to Islam in 1967. He has written on a wide-range of subjects, and is especially well-known for his criticisms of modern banking and modern education.

#### **Ul Haq, Abu Yusuf Riyadh**

A leading Deobandi scholar in the UK, he has been markedly influential through his work with the Al-Kawthar Academy in Leicester. Al-Kawthar is a leading Islamic educational institution at the forefront of knowledge proliferation through diverse media forms.

## North America

### — CANADA —

#### **Badawi, Dr Jamal**

Dr Jamal Badawi is an Egyptian-Canadian preacher and a highly sought-after speaker on Islam. He is a prolific writer, interfaith advocate, and activist and has authored numerous books on Islam and founded the Islamic Information Foundation in Canada. Badawi is a member of the executive council of the Fiqh Council of North America.

#### **Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz**

Sheikh Rabbani is the founder, education director, and instructor at SeekersGuidance an educational institute featuring a very popular Q&A service, on-line courses, and occasional retreats. In August 2011 he helped launch SeekersHub in Toronto with affiliated branches being developed in Australia and elsewhere. He was formally a central figure with SunniPath and has continuously been at the vanguard of effectively utilizing the latest web technologies and services to teach Islam in the West for over a decade.

### — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

#### **Estes, Sheikh Yusuf**

Sheikh Yusuf Estes is a well-known preacher of a Salafi background who lectures all over the world. He is the former national Muslim chaplain for the US Bureau of Prisons and uses multimedia to spread Islam in an accessible manner. In 2012, he was awarded the “Islamic Personality of the Year Award” by the 16th Dubai International Holy Quran Award (DIHQQA). His videos have been seen millions of times on YouTube alone.

#### **Kabbani, Shaykh Muhammad Hisham**

Shaykh Kabbani established the American branch of the Haqqani Educational Foundation, dedicated to the promotion of the fundamental Islamic teachings of tolerance, respect and peace. Since Shaykh Muhammad Nizam Adil’s retirement, Kabbani has become the leader of the Naqshbandi Haqqani Sufi Order. In 1991, Kabbani moved to the United States and has since founded 23 study and meeting centers in the United States and Canada as well as an Islamic retreat center in Michigan focusing on spreading Sufi teachings.

### **Shakir, Imam Zaid**

Shakir is an influential Islamic scholar currently affiliated with the Zaytuna Institute. He founded Masjid Al-Islam in Connecticut, the Tri-State Muslim Education Initiative and the Connecticut Muslim Coordinating Committee. He has worked with Shiekh Hamza Yusuf to develop the first American Islamic seminary, which graduated its inaugural class in 2008. They have since co-founded Zaytuna College, which aspires to become a fully accredited institution. He recently launched the annual 1 Billion Salawat initiative held on November 4, 2012 in which nearly 15,000 gatherings of Muslims across the globe sent over 140 million prayers of salawat with the goal of eventually reaching over 1 billion salawat annually.

### **Wahhaj, Siraj**

Siraj Wahhaj is imam of the Al-Taqwa Mosque in Brooklyn, a prolific lecturer, community activist, the leader of the Muslim Alliance in North America, and former Vice President of ISNA. He first became famous for his successful efforts in fighting drugs and crime in his neighborhood. In 1991, he became the first Muslim to recite the Opening Prayer of the Qur'an (Al-Fatiha) at the US House of Representatives.

### **Webb, Suhaib**

Suhaib Webb was a student at Al-Azhar University in Egypt from 2004–2010 and has come to prominence as a young American preacher and activist from Oklahoma. He has a substantial following of Muslim youth who visit his website and attend his lectures in throngs due to his unique appeal and moderate approach to Islam. His website, [www.SuhaibWebb.com](http://www.SuhaibWebb.com), was voted the best “Blog of the Year” by the 2009 Brass Crescent awards and his tweets won him the vote of “Best Muslim Tweeter” of 2010.

## *Central America*

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### — EL SALVADOR —

### **Qattan, Dr Ahmad**

Qattan is a Muslim convert of Palestinian origin. He is the cofounder of the Arab Islamic Center in Salvador. Qattan has been an educator and da'wa activist for the past 17 years, and has published more than 100,000 copies of an introductory text on Is-

lam, which has been read by an estimated 250,000 people.

### — MEXICO —

### **Rojas, Isa**

Rojas is a da'wa activist and author of numerous articles about Islam in Spanish and French. He is also a student of religion at Al-Madina University, Saudi Arabia. Around 4 million people or more have read his articles and translations which have been published on various Islamic websites. He is one of the writers and editors at Islamweb.net.

## *Caribbean*

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### — TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO —

### **Hosein, Shaykh Imran**

Shaykh Imran Hosein has become increasingly popular in recent years due mainly to his lectures which have been viewed on youtube. His lecture topics frequently look at current events and try to put them into a larger perspective often linking them to an ‘end days’ scenario. He has also written books on Jerusalem, Islam and Buddhism, the Gold Dinar and many other topics.

# PHILANTHROPY, CHARITY & DEVELOPMENT

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — IRAQ —

#### **Al-Khoei, Sayyed Jawad**

Sayyed Al-Khoei is the secretary general of the London-based Al-Khoei International Foundation, an international charity promoting the welfare of Shi'a communities throughout the world. He spends his time between the United Kingdom and his native Iraq. As a researcher in Islamic Affairs, Sayyed Jawad has authored various studies and articles on the religious minorities in Iraq and the need for interfaith dialogue.

### — LEBANON —

#### **Al-Sadr, Rabab**

Rabab Al-Sadr is a social and human rights activist and a philanthropist. She is a dynamic thinker and is the president of the Imam Al-Sadr Foundation, one of the most successful humanitarian organizations working in Lebanon. The foundation's projects focus on training, development and poverty alleviation across Lebanon. She is the sister of Imam Musa Al-Sadr.

#### **Daouk, Amine M.**

Daouk is the head of the Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut. Makassed is one of the oldest modern Islamic development organizations in Lebanon. It started as an initiative to make free education available to girls and has developed into a major Muslim development organization, focusing on education, health care, and social issues.

### — SAUDI ARABIA —

#### **Abu Sulayman, Muna**

Muna Abu Sulayman is the former Director of the Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, and was the first Saudi woman to become a regional TV personality. She is one of the founding co-hosts of the show "Kalam Nawa'em" which was ranked number one across the Arab World for five years in a row. She

was also chosen as the first Saudi UN Goodwill Ambassador for the UNDP as well as a Young Global Leader at the World Economic Forum in the same year.

#### **Al-Madani, H.E. Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali**

Al-Madani is the president of the Islamic Development Bank, which aims to provide short and long-term solutions to poverty alleviation in the Muslim World. The Islamic Development Bank is the principal financing institution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Previously, Al-Madani served as the deputy minister of education in Saudi Arabia, and as secretary general of the Muslim World League. He currently serves as a Member of the Board of Trustees of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology.

#### **Al-Rajhi, Sulaiman Abdul Aziz**

Al-Rajhi owns the biggest stake in the world's largest organization for Islamic banking and finance, Al-Rajhi Bank, with roughly 60 outlets in Saudi Arabia and additional outlets in Malaysia. As Saudi Arabia's richest non-royals, members of the Al-Rajhi family are among the world's leading philanthropists. They also run the SARR Foundation: a network of charities and research organizations. He has been listed as one of the "Richest Arabs 2010" by Arab Business and UAE Mega Projects.

#### **Kreidie, Dr Samir**

Kreidie is managing director of the Rabya Trading & Agriculture Company. He is the founder of the Inma Foundation, which helps provide humanitarian support to impoverished people in Lebanon. He is also a director at Development Foundation International, an organization which strives to increase American participation in Lebanese humanitarian efforts.

### — UNITED ARAB EMIRATES —

#### **Al-Hussein, H.R.H. Princess Haya**

H.R.H. Princess Haya bint Al-Hussein of Jordan is married to H.H. Amir Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and the ruler of Dubai. Princess Haya is recognized for her efforts in developing initiatives in humanitarianism, sports, health, science, culture and business, as well as advancing the Millennium Development Goals toward the alleviation of hunger and poverty. She chairs Dubai's International Humanitarian City

which is now the world's largest operational center for the delivery of aid in emergencies. She was an ambassador for the World Food Programme 2005–2007, and then appointed a UN Messenger of Peace in July 2007 by Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon. She was a founding member of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Global Humanitarian Forum based in Geneva, writes editorials and articles on hunger, nutrition and the UN Millennium Development Goals, and serves on the boards of many non-profit organizations.

**Al-Qassimi, Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed**  
Sheikh Sultan is the ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah. He had the educational vision to start 'University City' which included the American University of Sharjah, the University of Sharjah, and other colleges. Since then, his vision has inspired neighbouring emirates and countries to emulate his endeavour of bringing world-class university education to the region. He is known for his philanthropic activities and has endowed Chairs for Arabic and Islamic studies in Western universities (e.g. Exeter University).

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

### — SOUTH AFRICA —

#### **Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail**

Sooliman is the founder of the Gift of the Givers Foundation. It is the largest disaster relief organization of African origin on the African continent. His organization has delivered over \$37 million in aid to 25 countries around the world. The organization has also designed and developed the world's first and largest containerized mobile hospital, which has been deployed in Bosnia. It also runs 24 development projects in South Africa and Malawi. He was awarded South Africa's Order of the Beobab for distinguished service in April 2010.

## *Asia*

### — INDIA —

#### **Prenji, Azim**

Prenji is an Indian business tycoon and philanthro-

pist who is the chairman of Wipro Limited (a leader in the software industry). According to Forbes, he is currently the third wealthiest Indian as well as being the richest Indian Muslim. The Azim Premji Foundation supports programs that reach more than 2.5 million children. His recent \$2 billion donation to his foundation was the largest charitable contribution in the history of modern India. In 2011, he was awarded Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award by the Government of India.

#### **Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal**

Maulana Badruddin Ajmal is a prominent businessman in India who runs the Ajmal Group of Companies, which sells attar perfume, oils and textiles. He is a proponent and member of various social service organizations and is also a scholar of Islam, having studied at the Darul Uloom Deoband. Qasmi is also a politician who founded the Assam United Democratic Front political party. He is noted for his contributions to charitable hospitals, orphanages, and educational institutions including a women's science college.

### — INDONESIA —

#### **Bagir, Haidar**

Haidar Bagir is the founder and director of Mizan, a large publishing company that significantly shapes the development of Islamic discourse in Indonesia. Bagir has founded and lectured in many educational institutions, and his philanthropic contributions include work on community development. He has written extensively on Sufism.

### — MALAYSIA —

#### **Al-Bukhary, Syed Mokhtar**

Syed Mokhtar Al-Bukhary is the 8th richest Malaysian, according to Forbes. He owns a variety of companies including Malaysian Mining Corporation. He has established many humanitarian projects including rebuilding the lives of Afghan refugees, helping Pakistan's tsunami victims and establishing an AIDS hospital in Uganda. He also supports many educational foundations.

### — PAKISTAN —

#### **Edhi, Abdul Sattar**

Abdul Sattar Edhi is the founder of the Edhi Foundation; the largest and most organized social wel-

fare system in Pakistan. For over 50 years, Edhi has devoted his time and resources to help the less fortunate by providing a range of services including a 24-hour emergency service across the country through 300 'Edhi centers', which provide free burial of unclaimed dead bodies. He also funds free hospitals and dispensaries, rehabilitation for drug addicts, shelter for the destitute, orphans and handicapped persons, and national and international relief efforts. In November 2011, Edhi was recommended for a Nobel Peace prize by the Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani.

#### **Rizvi, Prof. Dr Adib**

He is one of the country's leading humanitarians, having established the largest free health organization in Pakistan. He works as a doctor and an administrator at SIUT in Karachi, which was founded in 1971 as an 8-bedded unit.

## *Europe*

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### — UNITED KINGDOM —

#### **Al-Banna, Dr Hany**

Al-Banna is the co-founder and president of Islamic Relief, the largest Western-based international Muslim relief and development NGO. Established in 1984, the organization provides assistance in over 30 countries worldwide. Queen Elizabeth honoured Al-Banna's work, giving him an OBE for his services to the community.

#### **Kazmi, Nadeem**

Nadeem Kazmi is the director for International Development of the Imam Al-Khoei Benevolent Foundation based in London. The foundation is notable for its humanitarian aid and for its community work in both the UK and the United States.

## *North America*

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### — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

#### **Cheema, Dr Tariq H.**

Dr Cheema is the founder of the World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists, a Chicago-based organization seeking to promote effective and accountable giving. The organization is the premier community

of Muslim philanthropists in the world, with a number of high-level stakeholders. Cheema is a physician by profession and in 1998 he co-founded Doctors Worldwide, which provides medical relief in 18 countries. In early 2010 Dr Cheema announced a new global awareness initiative, 'Empowerment through Enlightenment', aimed at achieving the UN Millennium Development goal of promoting gender equality.

## *South America*

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### BRAZIL

#### **Othman, Abdul-Baqi Sayed**

Othman is the director of Rio de Janeiro's Charitable Society of Muslims (Sociedade de Beneficente Muçulmana). He has represented Brazilian Muslims in many international conferences. Othamn is also a da'wa activist, and runs the IQRA publishing center in Brazil where he helps publish translations of various Islamic books.

# SOCIAL ISSUES

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — EGYPT —

#### **Abulmagd, H.E. Prof. Dr Kamal**

Abulmagd was the Vice President of the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt. He is an important intellectual in Egypt and the wider Arab World, and holds significant influence over media relations and public diplomacy in the Middle East. Shortly after September 11, 2001 Abulmagd was appointed the Commissioner Responsible for Dialogue between Civilizations by the Arab League. He is noted as one of the most influential 'new Islamist' thinkers.

### — IRAN —

#### **Ebadi, Shirin**

Shirin Ebadi is a lawyer who, in 2003, became the first Iranian to win the Nobel Peace Prize. She is the founder of Children's Rights Support Association and has defended and supported the rights of children and women. Ebadi lectures about the human rights situation in Iran and espouses a liberal view of Islam appreciated by many Muslim feminists.

### — PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES —

#### **Abu Awwad, Khaled**

Khaled Abu Awwad is the General Manager of the Israeli-Palestinian Bereaved Families Forum and Chairman of Al-Tariq (The Palestinian Institution for Development and Democracy). He was awarded the 2011 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the promotion of tolerance and non-violence.

#### **Abu Elaish, Dr Izzeldin**

Dr Izzeldin Abu Elaish lost his three daughters during the Israeli bombardment of Gaza in 2009. His phone call to national Israeli TV pleading for help moments after the killing has become part of the public consciousness. He is a public health expert working in an Israeli hospital, and a Palestinian peace activist nominated for the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize. He is an outspoken advocate of a lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace. He is the founder of the Cana-

dian registered charity "Daughters for Life Foundation", which was established in memory of his three daughters, and which supports women in education.

#### **Abu Sarah, Aziz**

Aziz Abu Sarah is a Palestinian activist who is globally recognized for his work on peace and conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He was formerly the director of International Relations for the Parents Circle – Families Forum, and co-hosted Radio All for Peace, a bilingual radio show on 107.2 FM in Jerusalem until 2008, when he relocated to the US where he is now the Director of Middle East Projects at George Mason University's Center for World Religions, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution. Abu Sarah is also a lecturer and writes for major news outlets about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and peace movements.

### — QATAR —

#### **Al-Thani, H.E. Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh bint Nasser**

Sheikha Aisha Al-Thani is the founder of the Doha Academy and board member of Reach Out to Asia, Qatar. She is also a member of the Qatar Supreme Education Council, the highest educational authority in Qatar. She is a modernist development thinker, who promotes a more pronounced and well-judged engagement with people of faith. Sheikha Aisha's perspective resonates with the more concerted efforts by humanitarian organizations to look at the networks of people of faith as a solution to practical development problems.

#### **Al-Thani, Dr Abdulla bin Ali**

Dr Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani is the President of the new Hamad Bin Khalifa University in the State of Qatar, and is Chairman of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE). Dr Abdullah, a member of Qatar's ruling family and a former university professor, is the man at the centre of many of Qatar's education initiatives, and is leading the way to transform Qatar's educational system.

### — SAUDI ARABIA —

#### **Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed**

Obaid is the executive director of the United Nations Population Fund, the world's largest multi-lateral fund for population assistance. Obaid is the first Saudi Arabian to head a UN agency and is also

the chair of the principle inter-agency organization for coordinating management matters within the UN. She has underlined religion and culture as important aspects for the agency's development work.

— SUDAN —

**Al-Turabi, Hassan Abdallah**

Al-Turabi is a Sudanese religious leader. He is widely regarded as a moderate and uses Islamic teachings to foster social development. Al-Turabi is an advocate for women's rights, and believes Muslim fundamentalists place prohibitions above social development. He has recently stated that Sudanese president Omar Al-Bashir should give himself up to the International Criminal Court for the sake of Sudan.

— YEMEN —

**Baobaid, Dr Mohammad**

Mohammed Baobaid is the founder of the Muslim Family Safety Project and was the second recipient of Every Day Hero Award of the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children at the University of Western Ontario. Baobaid was the head of the department of psychology at the University of Sana'a and was well-known in his research on domestic violence and children in conflict with the law.

**Karman, Tawakul**

Karman was one of three women jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2011. She is a Yemeni journalist and activist who has regularly led protests against the government. Over the past 6 years, this 32-year-old mother of three has campaigned for the release of political prisoners, and advocated freedom of expression and other human rights. These activities have caused her to be jailed several times.

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*Sub-Saharan Africa*

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— BURKINA FASO —

**Aboubakary, Maiga**

Aboubakary is the secretary general of the Burkina Faso Islamic Organization for Population and Development. His organization promotes family-planning in mosques around the country. The tremendous growth rate in Burkina Faso has put great

strain on the economy there, and threatens to sharpen the already serious problem of poverty.

— BURUNDI —

**Nkunduwiga, Haruna**

Nkunduwiga is the secretary general of the Muslim Community of Burundi. He has been working recently to battle the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Burundi with other faith leaders to raise awareness, asking people to 'stay clean'. HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Burundi, affecting close to 20 percent of the urban population and near to 10 percent of the rural population.

— COTE D'IVOIRE —

**Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba**

Abdoulaziz is the leader of the Association Soulatine Pour Les Actions De Bienfaisance. He works in Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso on the development of the Muslim community, and the fair treatment of Muslims. He has been active at major international conferences trying to deal with the problem of Islamophobia.

— MALAWI —

**Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala**

Chabulika is the Islamic Information Bureau's national coordinator. He is known as an Islamic rights activist and has taken it upon himself to present the need to address social issues as religious duties. Chabulika works on health issues, exploitation, and has built bridges with non-Muslims in Malawi. He has also fought against the forced teaching of religious texts to school children.

— NIGER —

**Mindaoudou, H.E. Dodo Aichatou**

Mindaoudou is the Nigerien Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and African Integrity. She has served the government since the mid-1990s, and is the former secretary general for the Network for Rural Law. She has written extensively about economic development and women's issues. She is one of the most senior-level women politicians in West Africa.

**Ashafa, Imam Muhammad**

Ashafa is the co-director of the Muslim-Christian Interfaith Mediation Centre in the city of Kaduna, Northern Nigeria—leading task forces to resolve conflicts across the country. He works with Christian Pastor James Wuye to promote peace between religions. Both were injured and affected by inter-religious violence. Pastor Wuye and Imam Ashafa have gained a wide audience and mass interest in their particular story through speaking on the issue around the world.

**Abdi, Dr. Hawa**

Dr. Hawa Abdi has for more than two decades been providing humanitarian assistance to the the most vulnerable victims of the civil war in Somalia. She has saved tens of thousands of lives in her hospital, while simultaneously providing an education to hundreds of displaced children at the Waqaf-Dhiblawe school. Abdi also runs a small hospital, often with the help of her daughters Deqo and Amina, who are also doctors, on her own savings and donations. She also helps provide food and clean water, runs a school and literacy classes for women and campaigns against female genital mutilation.

**Elmi, Asha Haji**

Asha Haji Elmi is a peace activist in Somalia who in 2008 won the Right Livelihood Award (known as the alternative Nobel Prize). She is an activist for women's rights and formed the Six Clan 125 movement when women were excluded from the peace process in Somalia that involved the five traditional clans. Elmi is also the founder of Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) and campaigns internationally against female genital mutilation in Somalia and in other areas of Africa.

**Osman, Hibaag**

A Somali Muslim and women's rights activist, Hibaag Osman is Special Representative to Africa for V-Day—a movement against violence against women. She is the founder of Karama, a regional movement working to end violence against women in the Arab World. She is also the founding CEO of the Arab Women's Fund and founder of the Center for the Strategic Initiatives of Women (CSIW).

**Joya, Malalai**

A well know activist, writer and a former politician from Afghanistan. She was a Parliamentarian in the National Assembly of Afghanistan, later to be dismissed for publicly condemning the Afghani parliament. She was the first ever to speak against the democratically elected Karzai administration and its western supporters, specifically the United States. Her actions have received international acclaim. She was listed in the 100 Times most influential people of 2010 as well as in the Guardian's top 100 women. She is renowned for her attempts to teach females how to read and write in the refugee camp where she resided during the Soviet Afghani war, later to be smuggled back to Afghanistan at the age of 16 to set up a secret school for girls.

**Abed, Sir Fazle Hasan**

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed is founder and Chairman of one of the largest nongovernmental organizations in the world, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC). It was established over 40 years ago and now has more than 140 million students of all levels and ages and in nine countries. He was recognised for a lifetime's work bringing basic primary education to some of the world's poorest communities, from Afghanistan to South Sudan by being awarded the WISE prize ( established by the Qatar Foundation).

**Hossain, Dr Hameeda**

Dr Hossain has published many books and articles relating to human rights and women's issues in Bangladesh, in Islam, and worldwide. She is a founding member of Ain o Salish Kendra, a legal aid and human rights organization.

**Yunus, Mohammad**

Mohammad Yunus is the founder of the Grameen Bank. He developed the concept of microcredit for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006. His efforts to create economic and social development and to help the impoverished escape poverty by providing loans on terms suitable to them and by teaching them a few sound financial principles have been recognized by many interna-

tional organizations including the King Hussein Foundation, Jordan and UNESCO. In 2012, he was named the Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland.

— INDONESIA —

**Amalee, Irfan**

Irfan Amalee created the Peace Generation Program that trains peace agents, develops peace education modules, and promotes books door-to-door. It has since grown into a community of over 15,000 young people who have set up their own training and bookretail businesses from Aceh to Sulawesi. Amalee is also the youngest member of Mizan Publishers, where he established Pelangi Mizan, a Muslim children's book publication. He was a recipient of the British Council's 2008 International Young Creative Entrepreneur Award.

**Muhammad, Husein**

Husein Muhammad is a commissioner of Indonesia's National Commission on Violence against Women. He is one of the founders of Fahmina Institute (in 1999), an NGO that advocates women's issues using an Islamic framework and reinterpretation of Islamic classical literature, tafsir and fiqh. Muhammad has also written many articles and books about gender and women's issues in Islam. Muhammad led an anti-trafficking media campaign, which included the distribution of 22,000 leaflets each week in mosques after Friday prayers, along with outreach to village health clinics. His scholarship highlights the Islamic perspective on victims' rights, the rights of women and children, and the immorality of human trafficking, while emphasizing that victims should not be criminalized and that communities have a responsibility to combat trafficking.

— MALAYSIA —

**Abdul Kader, Mohideen**

Kader is Vice President of the Consumers' Association of Penang, which works to secure the rights of every person to basic needs, a clean and safe environment, and the development of indigenous culture and knowledge. He is also a board member of Citizens International, an NGO working on international political issues.

**Anwar, Zaynah**

Anwar is the founder and former executive direc-

tor of Sisters in Islam, an organization committed to gender issues and increasing respect for women. She is also a journalist who has contributed to the New Straits Times and the Star, the country's two main newspapers, and has written a book about Islam in Malaysia. She also addressed prestigious overseas forums such as the World Economic Forum in Davos. She has delivered a keynote address titled 'Islam, Human Rights, and Activism' at Harvard University.

— NEPAL —

**Siddiqui, Muhammadi**

Mohammadi Siddiqui is a pioneer female Muslim politician, a social worker, and a human rights activist. She established the Fatima Foundation in 2003 to ensure Muslim women's rights on two related fronts: the personal daily struggle of women against discrimination, and the social and legal practices that influence women's independence and access to basic rights. The foundation organizes Muslim women's groups and works with religious scholars and women leaders to educate women and raise awareness of their rights in order to advocate for the practice of 'actual' Islamic law and ensure social justice for women. The foundation also publishes books and translations of the Qur'an in the local language; it also provides services to the victims of domestic violence.

— PHILIPPINES —

**Abubakar, Ismael**

Abubakar is the former speaker of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao's regional legislative assembly. He is now concentrating on business and interfaith dialogue, convening the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy. He is from the predominantly Muslim Sama tribe, which garners him a significant amount of respect in dealing with the Muslim militants.

**Lao, Yasmin Busran**

Yasmin Busran Lao is a prominent women's activist and peace advocate who is currently running as a senatorial candidate with the Liberal Party for the May 2010 election. The US government conferred the Ninoy Aquino Public Service Award on Busran Lao for her work in uplifting the plight of the marginalized. She has cofounded various women's rights and development organizations.

### **Rasul, Santanina Tillah**

The first Muslim woman elected to the Philippine Senate, former Senator Santanina Tillah Rasul is noted for her work toward gender equality, improved literacy, and Muslim affairs in the Philippines. She exercised her influence in the senate to open up the Philippine Military Academy to women, among other initiatives aimed at women's rights. She turned 82 years old in 2012.

### **Rasul-Bernardo, Amina**

Rasul-Bernardo is a distinguished peace and human rights advocate in Asia. She is the director of the Philippine Council on Islam and Democracy (PCID). She is the recipient of the Muslim Democrat of the Year Award from the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy for her long-term advocacy for democracy and peace in the Muslim Mindanao region. Rasul-Bernardo is also a founding member of a microfinancing organization aimed at Muslim and indigenous women—the Muslim Professional and Business Women's Association of the Philippines. As a founding member of the Magbassa Kita Foundation, she was responsible for raising \$2 million to fund the foundation's program for literacy in the Muslim and indigenous communities.

### — SRI LANKA —

#### **Ismail, Jezima**

The founder of the Muslim Women's Research and Action Forum (MWRAF), and the President of the Sri Lanka Muslim Women's Conference (SLMWC) Jezima Ismail has been an educator for over three decades. She serves on various international committees on women's rights and is the recipient of various awards in recognition of her work.

### **Marsoof, Justice Saleem**

Justice Marsoof is a judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka and former president of the Court of Appeals. He is an award-winning lecturer on law and development of legal studies and a prolific author with special interest in law reform in Sri Lanka.

### — THAILAND —

#### **Sabur, M. Abdus**

Sabur is the secretary general and co-founder of the Asian Resource Foundation and the Asian Muslim Action Network. He is also co-director of the School of Peace Studies and Conflict Transforma-

tion in Bangkok. In the nineties Sabur served as coordinator of the Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD). He has edited a number of publications on peace and dialogue in Southeast Asia including Understanding Human Rights: Perspectives from South Asia, Interfaith Conference on the Culture of Peace, Globalization and Asian Perspectives for an Alternative Development and Towards Peace in Multi-Ethnic Asia.

## *Europe*

### — AUSTRIA —

#### **Dirie, Waris**

Dirie is a Somali-Austrian women's rights activist and former international supermodel. She was appointed UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and founded several organizations, including the Waris Dirie Foundation, to raise awareness about FGM. Dirie underwent FGM as a child and seeks to build awareness around the fact that Islam does not require the practice. She is the author of several best-selling books.

### — BELGIUM —

#### **Ozdemir, Mahinur**

Ozdemir is a young politician and the first hijab-wearing Member of Parliament of any European country. She was sworn in to the Belgian parliament, while wearing a headscarf. The event garnered mass interest in Turkey, where in 1999 Merve Kavakçi was denied the right to take her oath of office because of her hijab. Ozdemir is of Turkish origin and is a member of the Francophone Christian Democrat party.

### — BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA —

#### **Mahmutcehajic, H.E. Prof. Dr Rusmir**

Mahmutcehajic is the president of the International Forum Bosnia, and a former Vice President of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He has been very important in efforts to heal the ethnic, religious and social divisions that happened as a result of the Bosnian War in the mid-1990s. His projects are some of the most successful at producing real healing between communities. He works in his hometown of Stolac,

which is one of the most deeply divided towns in Bosnia.

— ITALY —

**Qaddorah, Jamal**

Qaddorah is a representative of Italy's largest trade union CGIL. In 2010, he helped to organize the 'A Day Without Us' immigrant rally across Italy. The strike drew well over 20,000 participants and helped to highlight the important role that immigrants play in the Italian economy. A significant portion of immigrants come to Italy from countries such as Nigeria, Morocco, and Bangladesh and make up about 8 percent of the labour force there.

— TURKEY —

**Gül, Hayrünnisa**

Hayrünnisa Gül is the wife of President Abdullah Gül and is the first First Lady of Turkey to wear the hijab, causing controversy and consternation among some secularist citizens and politicians. In the early 1990s, she appealed to the European Court of Human Rights to overturn Turkey's hijab ban. She is the most visible headscarf-wearing person in Turkey and has great influence in publicizing the cause of the hijab.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Abdul Bari, Dr Muhammad**

Dr Abdul Bari is the Chairman of the East London Mosque and was the secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain, the largest Islamic umbrella organization in the United Kingdom. The MCB has over 500 national, regional and local affiliate organizations and strives to promote a full and participatory role for Muslims in public life.

**Qureshi, Prof. Khawar**

Khawar Qureshi QC is one of the world's leading experts on public international law. He is the youngest advocate ever to have appeared before the International Court of Justice in 1993 for Bosnia's genocide case against Yugoslavia. As a QC, a barrister appointed as counsel to the British Crown, Qureshi was one of four 128 specially selected counsellors to appear in hearings concerning alleged international terrorists. He was a legal adviser to the Bosnian government during the Dayton Peace Talks and remains

the vice chairman of the International Committee of the Bar Council of England and Wales.

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*Oceania*

— AUSTRALIA —

**Ali, Imam Afroz**

Imam Afroz studied in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Mauritania and at Al-Azhar University before he established the Al-Ghazzali Centre for Islamic Sciences & Human Development. Also a professional architect, he offers commercial corporate training on Team Building, Personal Leadership, Spiritual Development, and Motivation and Goal Setting. He is involved in various community development and sustainable environment projects in Australia and the Pacific and is a recipient of the International Ambassador for Peace award. Lately, he has worked extensively with SeekersGuidance where he serves as the Managing Director.

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*North America*

— CANADA —

**Kutty, Faisal**

A leading Canadian lawyer, Faisal Kutty is outspoken on issues of human rights, Islamic thought and anti-terror legislation. He is a founding member of the Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association and has written numerous academic articles, papers, reviews and essays on topics ranging from national security to religion and law.

— UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

**Al-Hibri, Dr Azizah**

Chairperson of Karamah Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, Dr al-Hibri Esq. leads a dynamic organization dedicated to the empowerment of Muslim women by focusing on the egalitarian message of gender-equity in the Qur'an. Al-Hibri is also a professor of law at the T.C. Williams School of Law, University of Richmond. She was appointed by President Obama as a member of the Constitution Project's Liberty and Security Committee and

in 2011 as a commissioner on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

#### **Awad, Nihad**

Nihad Awad is the co-founder and Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). CAIR is the most prominent Muslim lobby group in the US and is frequently sought out by the media and politicians for the Islamic perspective on events.

#### **El-Messidi, Tarek**

Tarek El-Messidi is an influential social entrepreneur. In 2001, he co-founded the Fast-a-thon movement which asks non-Muslims to try fasting for one day, raising money to feed the hungry. It is now held globally at 300 college campuses and 14 Fortune500 offices. In 2010, Tarek founded CelebrateMercy, a semi-annual online webcast about the Prophet Muhammad, now serving 10,000 viewers and nearly 200,000 Facebook fans. In September 2012, following the killing of US Ambassador Stevens, Tarek mobilized Muslims from 115 countries to send thousands of personalized condolence letters to Stevens' family. As an American Muslim activist, Tarek has served on the board of multiple mosques and organizations and regularly speaks at Muslim conferences.

#### **Idriss, Shamil**

Shamil Idriss is the CEO of Soliya, a non-profit organization which uses the latest technology to build connections between young people and communities across the globe. He was formerly appointed deputy director of the Alliance of Civilizations by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and then took charge as executive director of the Alliance of Civilizations Media Fund, which merged with Soliya in 2009. Prior to this he was director of the Search for Common Ground Organization where he facilitated the first public visit of Americans to Iran since 1979.

#### **Kavakci-Islam, Prof. Dr Merve**

Merve Kavakçı is a professor of International Relations at Howard University and George Washington University. In 1999, she was barred from a position in the Turkish Parliament for refusing to remove her hijab. She is an important symbolic figure for the headscarf issue in Turkey and promotes Muslim women's rights at events all over the world, criticizing Turkey's anti-Islamic policies. Kavakçı is also a Hafiza of the Qur'an.

#### **Khan, Salman**

Salman Khan is the founder of the online educational platform, Khan Academy. The academy offers over 3,000 free online tutorials in an accessible manner in a range of subjects. These have proven to be highly popular with over 430,000 YouTube subscribers and 200 million views. It is run as a non-profit organisation and refuses commercial offers, preferring to be financed by donations. He recently published the international best-seller, *The One World School House* in October 2012.

#### **Mogahed, Dalia**

Dalia Mogahed is the executive director and a senior analyst at the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies and director of the Muslim- West Facts Initiative. She was appointed by President Obama to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighbourhood Partnerships and is the first hijab-wearing Muslim woman to hold a White House position. Mogahed has also held high positions in the US-Muslim Engagement Project and is co-author of the book *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*.

#### **Mujahid, Abdul Malik**

As President of the multimedia company Sound Vision he has created a critical educational resource for Muslims. His development of the Radio Islam nightly talk show in Chicago is not only a source of support for Muslims, but an important educational link to non-Muslims in the greater Chicago area. During his tenure as Chair of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago and now in his role as Chair of the Parliament of the World's Religions, Mujahid speaks with eloquence not only about the destructiveness of Islamophobia but also of the need for all people to come together in a spirit of justice and peace.

# BUSINESS

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — BAHRAIN —

#### **Al-Zayani, Afnan**

Afnan Al-Zayani is the CEO of the multi-million dollar company Al-Zayani Commercial Services (AZCS). She is recognized internationally as one of the most powerful businesswomen of this era. She is responsible for the passing of personal status laws in Bahrain that ensure the protection of Muslim women's rights in divorce and custody proceedings, something she oversaw during her leadership of the Bahrain Businesswomen's Society (BBS). Subsequently Al-Zayani led the Middle East and North Africa Businesswomen's Network and in 2010 she received the Leadership in Public Life Award from Vital Voices, a women's empowerment organization. She was listed among the most powerful women by Forbes and Arabian Business Magazine.

### — IRAN —

#### **Ansari, Anousheh**

Anousheh Ansari is a prominent Iranian businesswoman who is chairman, CEO, and co-founder of Prodea Systems, a private US-based company which offers technological solutions for businesses. She also co-sponsored the 'Ansari X Prize' with other members of the Ansari family which awarded \$10 million to the first NGO that launched a reusable manned spacecraft, in 2004. However she garners most of her influence for being the first privately-funded woman, and the first Iranian, to explore space in 2006. She was lauded for leading a new era that financially advances scientific development while extending participation in space exploration to women and 'space tourists.'

### — JORDAN —

#### **Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal**

Abu-Ghazaleh is the chairman and founder of the Talal Abu Ghazaleh Organization. He is accredited for introducing the concept of Intellectual Property into the Arab World. Abu-Ghazaleh has been selected as deputy chairman of the UN Global

Compact, as well as being appointed by the UN as Chair of UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development. He is the only person listed in the IP Hall of Fame in Chicago, USA, who is not from one of the G8 countries.

### — KUWAIT —

#### **Al-Bahar, Sheikha**

Sheikha Al-Bahar is the deputy CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait and is responsible for \$16bn. She is in charge of loans, investment banking, marketing and treasury. Al-Bahar is also the chairperson of Al-Watany Bank of Egypt and is the vice-chair at NBK Capital, a subsidiary of National Bank of Kuwait. She attended business schools such as Harvard Business School, California University, Stanford University and Duke University.

#### **Al-Ghunaim, Maha**

Al-Gunaim is an Arab Kuwaiti specializing in banking and finance. In 1998, she founded Global Investment House, one of the most renowned companies in the Arab World. She is well-known for taking the company international and into the London Stock Exchange in 2008 making it the first Kuwaiti company to be listed on the exchange. The firm is also listed on the Kuwait, Dubai and Bahrain bourses.

### — MOROCCO —

#### **Bouhia, Hynd**

A Moroccan-born, Harvard PhD holder, Bouhia was a helping hand in her country's bourse as well as being the Prime Minister's advisor on economic issues in 2004. Bouhia was in the forefront of securing foreign investment and attracted \$700m US grant to aid private enterprises. She was ranked as one of the most influential women in the world by Forbes Magazine as well as Arabian Business. Bouhia was a Special Assistant to the Vice President for Middle East and North Africa, specifically in economic, technical and diplomatic issues.

### — SAUDI ARABIA —

#### **Al-Amoudi, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali**

Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali Al-Amoudi is according to Forbes, the 63rd richest person in the world. He has a portfolio of businesses in oil, mining, agriculture, hotels, hospitals, finance, operations and maintenance in various countries in-

cluding Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia. His charitable and philanthropic works are substantial, especially in Ethiopia.

**Al-Saud, H.R.H. Prince Mohammed Al-Faisal**  
Prince Mohammed Al-Faisal has been groundbreaking in the area of Islamic finance, setting up the first modern bank run in compliance with the rules of sharia. The Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt was set up in Cairo in 1977, and aimed to be a model of Islamic banking for future initiatives. The bank was set up in Egypt because at the time Saudi Arabia rejected the idea that interest went against Islamic teachings; Islamic banking is founded on the premise of lending without interest. Prince Al-Faisal remains the chairman of the board of directors of the bank.

**Al-Saud, H.R.H. Prince Al-Waleed  
bin Talal bin Abdul Aziz**

Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal is an entrepreneur and investor who has built up a fortune through real estate and the stock market. His philanthropic clout comes from his position among the richest people in the world. Prince al Waleed contributed \$20 million to found the Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University, which remains one of the key institutions globally working on Christian-Muslim relations. As of March 2011, his net worth is estimated at US\$19.6 billion, according to Forbes, making him the 26th richest person in the world on their list published in March 2011. He has been nicknamed by Time magazine as the Arabian Warren Buffett.

**Bin Laden, Bakr**

Bakr bin Laden, half-brother of the deceased Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, is the chairman of the Saudi Binladin Group. The Binladin Group is a sizeable multinational construction company with operations in Saudi Arabia and over 30 countries—making Bakr bin Laden an increasingly influential power broker in Saudi business capital.

**Olayan, Lubna**

Lubna Olayan is internationally recognized as Saudi Arabia's top businesswoman. As a leading investor in the Saudi economy, chief executive officer of the Olayan Financing Company, and a board member for organizations such as Saudi Hollandi Bank, Rolls Royce and Citigroup, among others, she is one of the most influential businesswomen in the world.

— SUDAN —

**Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed 'Mo'**

Mohamed Ibrahim—more commonly known as Mo Ibrahim—is a Sudanese-born entrepreneur, currently based in the UK. He became successful as a businessman in the telecommunications industry, founding one of Africa's biggest cellular phone companies, Celtel. He has recently come to prominence for his idea of the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership—which awards the recipient a \$5 million initial payment, plus \$200,000 a year for life. The Prize was conceived as a way to curb corruption by African leaders, who often resort to corruption to obtain financial security when they leave office, and to promote good governance. The prize is believed to be the world's largest, surpassing the \$1.3 million Nobel Peace Prize.

— SYRIA —

**Alchaar, Dr Mohammed Nedal**

Alchaar is the secretary general of the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI). The AAOIFI is an independent international corporate organization supported by its 200 members from 45 countries around the globe which comprise the international Islamic banking and finance industry. It is one of the key organizations creating standards for the Islamic banking industry.

— UNITED ARAB EMIRATES —

**Al-Rostamani, Dr Amina**

Al-Rostamani is CEO of TECOM Investments Corporation, the investment wing of the Dubai Technology and Media Free Trade Zone since July of 2005. Al-Rostamani obtained the rank of 80 in the 'Power 100: The World's Most Influential Arabs' in 2009.

**Al-Abbar, Mohammed Ben Ali**

Mohammed Ben Ali Al-Abbar is a member of the Executive Board of the Government of Dubai and the director of the Department of Economic Development. Under his leadership Dubai has been one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. He has been successful in increasing the financial regulations requiring transparency; making Dubai a more attractive place to invest and do business in. He is one of the main assistants of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab

Emirates, and ruler of Dubai and is the Chairman of Emaar, one of the world's largest real estate companies.

#### **Al-Jaber, Fatima**

Al-Jaber is an Emirati business woman and chief operating officer of the Al-Jaber Group. She supervises more than 50,000 employees and manages around \$4.9 billion in assets. She speaks on a regular basis in economic-oriented conferences. Al-Jaber was the first ever Emirati woman to be elected to the board of directors at the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce in December 2009. She has several awards and in 2008 was "Businesswoman of the Year" at the Arabian Business Achievement Awards.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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#### — SOUTH AFRICA —

#### **Patel, Ebrahim**

Patel is the current Minister for Economic Development of South Africa and a former spokesperson for COSATU (the umbrella organization for South African trade unions). He is important because South Africa's booming economy is paradoxically leaving behind much of the population; this is because of both the HIV/AIDS situation and also the fact that South Africa has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world due to mass migration caused by the unstable situation in Zimbabwe.

## *Asia*

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#### — INDONESIA —

#### **Indrawati, Sri Mulyani**

Sri Mulyani Indrawati ranks among the most powerful women in the world. She is one of the few Indonesian policymakers with an international profile. She was recently reappointed Finance Minister in 2009. Her policy of increasing tax collection to boost state revenues has earned her many enemies among the business elite who are now under pressure to pay up. During her time as Finance Minister, Southeast Asia's largest economy has become a member of the group of 20 leading economies and is one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, partly thanks to the combination of sound

economic policies and a more stable political situation. She was appointed Managing Director of the World Bank in 2010.

#### — SRI LANKA —

#### **Bathiudeen, Abdul Rishad**

Is the Minister of Industry and Commerce of Sri Lanka. He has been hailed for serving thousands of forcibly evicted Northern Sri Lankan Muslims over the past 22 years. He also helped resettle 300,000 people displaced because of the war, regardless of their race or creed.

## *Europe*

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#### — TURKEY —

#### **Sabancı, Güler**

Sabancı is a renowned award-winning Turkish business woman, who is the chairperson of the family-controlled Sabancı Holding, a \$25 billion industrial and financial corporation, the second biggest in Turkey. Under her leadership, earnings of the corporation have soared and its operations have spread to 12 countries. She has been ranked by Wall Street Journal, Forbes Magazine and Financial Times as one of the most prominent business woman in the world. In April 2012, Ban Ki-moon appointed Sabancı as a member of the Board of United Nations Global Compact, the UN's highest-level advisory body involving business, civil society, labour and employers organizations.

## *North America*

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#### — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

#### **El Erian, Dr Mohamed**

El Erian is the CEO and CO-CIO of PIMCO, a global investment management firm and one of the world's largest bond investors with approximately US\$1.2 trillion of assets under management at the end of 2010. His book, *When Markets Collide*, was a New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestseller, and was named book of the year by The Economist. He was named to Foreign Policy's list of "Top 100 Global Thinkers" for 2009 and 2010.

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — EGYPT —

#### **El Naggar, Zaghloul**

El Naggar is an Egyptian geologist and scholar who writes and speaks on science and the Qur'an. He is a fellow of the Islamic Academy of Sciences, and is well-respected by the global scientific community for his work on geology. He has published close to 200 academic scholarly articles and scientific studies. He also works for the Arab Development Institute.

#### **El-Baz, Farouk**

Farouk El-Baz worked with NASA as an assistant in exploring the moon as well as selecting landing sites for the Apollo missions and the training of astronauts in lunar observations and photography. He is well-known for discovering groundwater in arid land and in 1999, the Farouk El-Baz Award for Desert Research, was established by the Geological Society of America Foundation (GSAF) to annually reward excellence in arid land studies. Another award was established in 2007 by the GSAF, Farouk El-Baz Student Research Award to encourage desert research. He has received numerous honors and awards, including: Egypt's Order of Merit – First Class.

### — IRAN —

#### **Salehi, Dr Ali Akbar**

Dr Ali Akbar Salehi was appointed as head of the Atomic Energy Organization in Iran in July 2009, after the resignation of Gholam Reza Aghazadeh. Salehi is an academic and politician who has been involved in developing Iran's nuclear energy program since before the Islamic revolution in 1979. He transitioned to leading the Atomic Energy Organization after serving as a permanent representative of Iran with the International Atomic Energy Agency. He has been the Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2010.

## *Asia*

### — INDIA —

#### **Abdul Kalam, Dr A.P.J.**

An engineer by profession, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam is a former president of India. Before becoming president, Kalam was the Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and Secretary of India's Defence Research and Development Organization from 1992 to 1999, during which he led the weaponization of strategic missile systems and nuclear testing in collaboration with the Department of Atomic Energy. This moved India from being a state with nuclear technology to a state with nuclear weapons. Kalam is also author of *India 2020*, which presents his vision of an Indian superpower by the year 2020.

### — INDONESIA —

#### **Mumpuni, Tri**

Tri Mumpuni has spent 14 years on improving rural communities in Indonesia through rural electrification initiatives based on developments with micro-hydro electric power plants. Her influential work, which offers economic incentives for implementation of the micro-hydro system, has been applied in 65 villages across Indonesia and a village in the Philippines. She was presented with the award for Community Power at the Ashden Awards in May 2012.

### — MALAYSIA —

#### **Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar**

Dr Shukor, an orthopaedic surgeon by profession, became the first Malaysian in space when he was selected as one of two astronauts to be trained at Star City in Russia and subsequently selected to be the astronaut to further Malaysia's Angkasawan program, which sent him to the International Space Station in 2007. He successfully conducted scientific experiments while in space. His launch also prompted the Malaysian National Fatwa Council to issue specific rulings regarding observance of religious obligations (praying and fasting) while in space. In 2010 Shukor was appointed as one of the ambassadors of Malaysia's nationwide reading campaign to encourage literacy among children.

— PAKISTAN —

**Atta-Ur Rahman**

Atta-Ur Rahman is the coordinator general of the OIC's COMSTECH— the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation for the promotion and cooperation of science and technology activities among the OIC member states. Rahman is also former Pakistani Federal Minister for Science and Technology, chairman of the Higher Education Commission and president of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences. In 1999 he became the first Muslim scientist to win the UNESCO Science Prize.

**Khan, Dr Abdul Qadeer**

Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan is the scientist who brought nuclear technology and nuclear weapons technology in the 1970s to Pakistan which was the first—and remains the only—Muslim country to have nuclear weapons. This has made him a figure of great international interest. He has continued to use his financial success and stature to improve the quality of education in Pakistan through building educational institutions for metallurgical engineering.

— SINGAPORE —

**Ying, Jackie**

Professor Jackie is the brainchild of the Micro-Kit or “Laboratory in a Cartridge”, which can be widely used to discover various infectious diseases. She is currently Professor at the Department of Chemical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA), has over 300 journal publications, 39 patents, and has been awarded and honored on an international basis.

— THAILAND —

**Dahlan, Prof. Dr Winai**

Prof. Dr Winai Dahlan is the director of the Halal Science Center (HASCI) in Thailand, named the Best Innovation in the Halal Industry by Malaysia's Halal Journal. HASCI promotes halal manufacturing and service through exhibitions and regional cooperation with Halal Centres in Indonesia and Malaysia. Dr Winai Dahlan is involved in scientific training and has written more than 30 original research articles published internationally and locally. He has also produced more than 2000 scientific and nutritional articles; writing weekly in 3 magazines since 1989.

*Europe*

— FRANCE —

**Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno Abd Al-Haqq**

Dr Guiderdoni is an expert on Islam in France, and professionally serves as the director of the Observatory of Lyon. He has written extensively on galaxy formation and evolution, Islamic theology and mysticism.

— TURKEY —

**Oktar, Adnan**

Writing under the pen name Harun Yahya, Adnan Oktar has gained international prominence as a spokesperson for creationism but also garners influence from his numerous and extensively distributed publications about Islam, and Islamic children's books. Over 200 lavishly produced books, which have been internationally distributed [often free-of-charge], most famously his *The Atlas of Creation* in which tens of thousands of copies of the book were delivered to schools, scholars and research institutes throughout Europe and the United States. He is vocal about his stance against concepts such as Darwinism and materialism and is outspoken on the implementation of his ideas in the West. His antics on his TV station, which include dancing to popular pop songs, have lost him much respect and credibility.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Al-Hassani, Dr Salim**

Dr Salim Al-Hassani is a former professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, and the celebrated author of *1001 Inventions: Muslim Heritage in Our World*—a best-selling account of scientific and technological developments in Islamic history. Dr Al-Hassani also serves as the chairman and founder of the Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilisation which partners with the Abdul Latif Jameel Foundation, a British charity, which showcased the ‘1001 Inventions Global Touring Exhibition’ across the UK, the United States, and Turkey in 2010.

## *North America*

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### — CANADA —

#### **Douciri, Dany**

Douciri is the Arabic language program coordinator at California State University San Bernardino and co-founder of Islamicity, one of the world's most popular websites on Islam. He is Vice President of Human Assistance & Development International, which aims to promote educational development and relief efforts.

### — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

#### **Amanat, Omar**

Omar Amanat is an entrepreneur, and successful businessman. He founded Tradescape Corporation before its sale to E\*Trade in 2002 for \$280 million. Amanat is the founder of Summit Entertainment, a production and distribution studio in Hollywood worth \$1 billion that created the popular sitcom 'Aliens in America.' The Wall Street Journal named Amanat one of the 'Top Ten Most Influential Technologists.'

#### **Zewail, Dr Ahmed**

Dr Zewail is a Linus Pauling Professor at the California Institute of Technology who won the 1999 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research in femtochemistry. He serves on Obama's Presidential Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. In January 2010 Dr Zewail was appointed one of the first US science envoys to the Muslim World. The group of scholars visited Muslim countries from North Africa to Southeast Asia to find opportunities to develop the fields of science and technology in the Muslim World.

## ARTS & CULTURE

### *Middle East & North Africa*

#### — EGYPT —

##### **Abo Auf, Dr Ezzat**

Abo Auf is president of both the Cairo International Film Festival and the Egyptian Actors Union. A successful actor and co-host of the highly popular on-air talk show ‘Cairo Today’; he is also an accomplished musician, having played with some of today’s most celebrated Egyptian musicians.

##### **Al-Aswany, Alaa**

Alaa Al-Aswany is considered to be one of Egypt’s best-selling novelists and a leading figure in current political reform movements in Egypt. A dentist by profession, Al-Aswany came to prominence for his 2002 novel, ‘Imarat Ya’qubian (The Yacoubian Building) which has since been translated into over 23 different languages. His second best-selling novel, ‘Chicago’, was published in 2007. He was a founding member of the political movement for change: Kefaya.

##### **Badreya, Sayed**

Badreya is an Egyptian born actor who played significant roles in some Hollywood movies. His production company “Zoom in Focus” emerged on the grounds of seeking to show the world the Arabic-American story. Much of his efforts with this regard have been publicized in prominent news networks, such as The New York Times, BBC, ABC and Fox News.

##### **El Wakil, Abdel-Wahed**

Abdel-Wahed El Wakil is an international architect considered by most as a contemporary icon for Islamic architecture. A student of the famous Hassan Fathy, El-Wakil has designed over 50 buildings all over the world, working for clients such as the Prince of Wales, and won various awards including the Aga Khan Award for Architecture twice and the First Prize for the Design of the Contemporary Mosque Architecture in Riyadh.

#### — IRAN —

##### **Nazeri, Shahram**

Shahram Nazeri is a world-famous icon of classical Persian, folkloric Kurdish and Sufi music. Hailed as ‘Iran’s Pavarotti’ by the Christian Science Monitor, Nazeri has released over 40 recordings to date and performed in major venues worldwide.

#### — JORDAN —

##### **Al-Baghdadi, Abbas Shakir Al-Fattal**

Abbas Al-Baghdadi is one of the world’s foremost exponents of Islamic calligraphy. He was born in 1951 in Baghdad and has had a distinguished career as a calligrapher and teacher of calligraphy. He adheres strictly to the rules of classical calligraphy and is adverse to ‘modern calligraphy’, especially when its practitioners do not master the art in its traditional form. He is well-known for the balance, clarity and majesty of his works.

##### **Al-Meheid, Minwer**

Minwer Al-Meheid is the Director of the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan. He has overseen the development of the College of Traditional Arts and Sciences at Balqa University in Amman, Jordan, which trains students in traditional arts. The College’s influence has started to show as Muslims the world-over have started commissioning work from its craftsmen. Al-Meheid is known for leading the recreation of the famous Minbar of Salahuddin, which was placed back in Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2007 (the original minbar was destroyed by an arson attack in 1969).

#### — LEBANON —

##### **Assaf, Roger**

Roger Assaf is a convert to Shi’ism. He is a prominent Lebanese director, actor and playwright. With his actress wife Hanane Hajj-Ali, he co-founded Al-Hakawati (Storyteller) Theatre Company and the Shams Cultural Cooperative for Youth in Theatre and Culture; an organization which provides underprivileged individuals with a forum for self-expression through drama.

#### — QATAR —

##### **Al-Thani, H.E. Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad**

Sheikha Al-Mayassa is the chairperson of Reach Out To Asia, an NGO that is under the Qatar Founda-

tion, that contributes to the development of societies in Asia, including the Middle East, with specific emphasis on improving the quality of both primary and secondary education, in addition to achieving some of the goals of UNESCO's Education For All (EFA) and the United Nations Millennium Development goals (MDGs). She is the chair of the board of the Qatar Museums Authority and has spearheaded Qatar's recent massive investment in art. She was named as 'the most powerful person in the art world' by 'Art and Auction' magazine.

— SYRIA —

**Taha, Uthman**

Read bio on page page 102 in 'Honorable Mentions'.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

— MALI —

**Keita, Salif**

Known as the 'golden voice of Africa', Salif Keita is an Afro-pop singer-songwriter from Mali. His West African music is combined with influences from Europe and the Americas. In 1977 Keita received a National Order Award from Guianese President Sékou Touré. His music is very popular in the Francophone world, and more broadly in Europe. Keita's latest album, *La Différence*, was awarded Best World Music 2010 by the Victoires de la Musique.

— SENEGAL —

**N'dour, Youssou**

Youssou N'dour became Senegal's Minister of Tourism and Culture in April 2012. He is a world famous composer, singer, percussionist and UNICEF Good-will Ambassador. In 2005, N'Dour received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary World Music Album for 'Egypt'. In 2011, N'Dour was awarded an honorary doctoral degree in Music from Yale University.

— SOUTH AFRICA —

**Bhika, Zain**

Zain Bhika is a South African singer-songwriter and a pioneer performer of nasheed songs. He is known for his collaborative efforts with other prominent

Muslim entertainers, including Yusuf Islam and Dawud Wharnsby Ali. Bhika also writes and directs plays written specifically for schools.

## *Asia*

— AZERBAIJAN —

**Qasimov, Alim**

Alim Qasimov is an Azerbaijani musician and one of the most recognized singers of Islamic-folk music in the world. In 1999, he was awarded the prestigious International IMC-UNESCO Music Prize. Qasimov has recorded nine albums, and performed in many concerts around the world. According to *The New York Times*, "Alim Qasimov is simply one of the greatest singers alive."

— CHINA —

**Chengzhi, Zhang**

Zhang Chengzhi is considered by many to be the most influential contemporary Muslim writer in China. His historical narrative "History of the Soul", about the rise of the Jahriyya Sufi Tariqah in China's northwest, was the second-most popular book in China in 1994.

**Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang)**

Haji Noor Deen is a globally-recognized Chinese master and lecturer in Arabic calligraphy. In 1997 he became the first Chinese Muslim to be awarded the Egyptian Certificate of Arabic Calligraphy and to be admitted as a member of the Association of Egyptian Calligraphy. He currently lectures on Arabic calligraphy at the Islamic College in Zhen Zhou, China and the Zaytuna Institute in California.

— INDIA —

**(A.R.) Rahman, Allah Rakha**

Rahman is a prolific composer, record producer, and musician for the Indian film industry. In 2011, *Time* described him as the world's most prominent and prolific film composer. He is the first Indian to receive a Golden Globe Award and two Academy Awards for his soundtrack of 'Slumdog Millionaire'; for which he also received two Grammy awards. He was named "CNN-IBN Indian of the Year" for 2009. In 2004, Rahman was appointed the "Global

Ambassador of 'The Stop TB Partnership', a World Health Organization project.

### **Khan, Irfan**

Khan is an Indian award-winning actor who has performed in internationally acclaimed movies such as 'Slumdog Millionaire'. He became known to the public after his participation in the movie 'The Warrior' in 2001. He is also the recipient of 2011 Padma Shri award, the fourth highest civilian award in India.

### **Khan, Shahrukh**

Named by Newsweek as one of the "50 most powerful people in 2008", Shahrukh Khan is the pre-eminent Indian Bollywood star, film producer and television host. Khan is the founder and owner of two production companies, Dreamz Unlimited and Red Chillies Entertainment. He campaigns for better relations between India's Muslim and Hindu communities. His 2010 movie 'My Name is Khan' was internationally acclaimed for its pertinent commentary on the relationship between Islam and the West after 9/11.

## — INDONESIA —

### **Rosa, Helvy Tiana**

Helvy Tiana Rosa is a prominent Indonesian writer and lecturer in literature at the State University of Jakarta (UNJ). Rosa is a member of Majelis Sastra Asia Tenggara (the Southeast Asia Board of Literature) and often represents Indonesia in literary events, both at home and abroad. She also helped found the "Pen Circle Forum" (FLP) in 1997 with the goal of encouraging young writers.

## — MALAYSIA —

### **Nadia, Asma**

Asma Nadia is a popular author based who has written over 40 books ranging from short stories collections, novels, and nonfiction (self improvement, sakinah family, parenting, motivational books etc). Movies have been made of two of her books. She has also established a publishing house, and a foundation to help young writers.

### **Raihan**

Raihan are a world famous Malaysian nasheed group with four members: Che Amran Idris, Abu Bakar Md Yatim, Amran Ibrahim and Zulfadli Bin Mustaza. Since their coming together in 1996, they

have made 11 albums and received numerous awards in Malaysia.

## — PAKISTAN —

### **Jamshed, Junaid**

A former pop icon, Junaid Jamshed left his career as a recording artist with the group 'Vital Signs' to join the ranks of Pakistan's highly respected Qur'an reciters and nasheed singers. The departure from pop music was associated with his participation in the Tablighi Jamaat organization starting in 2004. He has since released best-selling albums of Islamic songs. Muslim Charity has achieved a great deal under his leadership and expanded its operations to 16 countries.

### **Parveen, Abida**

Abida Parveen is an internationally-acclaimed vocalist, often referred to as the 'Queen of Sufi mystic singing'. She is the only woman to reach this level of influence in devotional music; specializing in traditional ghazals, often performing to stadium-size audiences across South Asia and globally.

### **Quadri, Muhammad Owais Raza**

With millions of followers, Quadri is considered a legend in the field of Naat khawan (reciter of naats). He is known for his passionate performances as well as his beautiful voice. A devout Muslim, he is particularly vocal on the subject of his love for the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

## *Europe*

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## — FRANCE —

### **Deghati, Reza**

Reza Deghati, more commonly known simply as Reza, is an internationally acclaimed photojournalist who has reported from all over the world for National Geographic, Vanity Fair, the New York Times and other reputable publications. He is also the founder of Aina; a non-profit humanitarian organization dedicated to civil society development through education, information, and communication initiatives. Deghati was the 2009 Recipient of the Lucie Award from the Lucie Foundation in New York.

### **Taghmaoui, Saïd**

Taghmaoui is an award winning French actor and screenwriter of Moroccan origin. Speaking five languages has helped pave the way for him to work internationally. He has made films in Italy, Germany, Morocco and the United States. He was nominated for a César Award in 1996 (Most Promising Actor).

#### — NETHERLANDS —

### **Benali, Abdelkader**

Abdelkader Benali is a Moroccan-Dutch writer and journalist. For his second novel, *De langverwachte* (The long-awaited one), Benalis received the Libris Prize for Literature. Besides writing novels and theatrical plays, Benali publishes essays and reviews in various media. His latest novel is *Hourglass* (2010).

### **El Mouhandiz, Rajae**

Rajae El Mouhandiz is a Dutch-Moroccan-Algerian poet, singer, composer, producer, and founder of the record label Truthseeker Records. After being the first Moroccan to study at a Dutch conservatory, El Mouhandiz left classical music to follow her own artistic path, seeking to incorporate her cultural roots. She has also presented an Islam-focused art & science program in Amsterdam.

#### — SWEDEN —

### **Zain, Maher**

A Swedish R&B singer, songwriter and music producer of Lebanese origin, Maher Zain sings mainly in English. He also occasionally sings in French, Arabic, Urdu, Turkish and Malay, among others. In January 2009, Maher Zain signed up and began working on an album with Awakening Records. Maher's debut album "Thank You Allah" reached the number 1 spot on Amazon.com World Music charts and number 9 on the R&B charts. He has 2 million fans on Facebook. In January 2010, Maher Zain won the best song for 2009 for 'Ya Nabi Salam Alayka'.

#### — TURKEY —

### **Yalçın, Rabia**

Rabia Yalçın is a Turkish fashion designer. Her creations represent a synthesis of local and international cultures and are inspired by the opulence of her homeland's Ottoman past. With her line Rabia Yalçın Haute Couture, Yalçın has a strong presence in the European fashion scene.

### **Çelebi, Master Hasan**

Master Hasan Çelebi is an eminent Turkish calligrapher who is hailed for his classical Ottoman calligraphy style. His exhibitions have been featured globally and he is celebrated for his restoration of calligraphic panels in mosques around the world—from the Masjid Al-Nabawi in Medina to the Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

#### — UNITED KINGDOM —

### **Islam, Yusuf**

Formerly known as Cat Stevens, Yusuf Islam is a globally influential British musician and singer-songwriter. In 1977, he converted to Islam and left the music industry for educational and philanthropic causes. His international fame and high-regard has probably made him the single most influential figure in the field of arts and culture in the Muslim World. He made a gradual return to music over the past five years with his latest albums; 'An Other Cup' and 'Roadsinger'. Islam is a vocal opponent of terrorism and extremism and in 2004 was recognized with the "Man of Peace" award by the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Committee.

### **Yusuf, Sami**

Sami Yusuf is an internationally popular British singer-songwriter whose music has revolutionized the nasheed industry. Yusuf's music is mostly comprised of Islamic themes—about being a Muslim in today's world. He is also known for his extensive involvement in charity work. His songs enjoy a broad appeal with all age groups in many parts of the Muslim World and in Europe and North America.

## *North America*

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#### — CANADA —

### **Nawaz, Zarqa**

Zarqa Nawaz is a journalist and filmmaker who produced the award-winning Canadian sitcom 'Little Mosque on the Prairie', a comedy about a Muslim family living in Saskatchewan. The series ran for 4 seasons and was aired on CBC. Nawaz owns a company called *Fundamentalist Films*, which produces films about Muslims living in North America.

### **Wharnsby, Dawud**

A Canadian singer-songwriter, poet, performer, educator and television personality, Dawud Wharnsby is best known for his pioneering efforts in the musical/poetic genre of English Language nasheed and spoken word.

#### — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

### **Friedlander, Shems**

Shems Friedlander is a writer, artist, film maker and photographer. He is the author of nine books among which are 'The Whirling Dervishes' and 'When you hear Hoofbeats think of a Zebra'. He has won over 30 awards for graphic design. Friedlander has written two monodramas and had his documentary films shown at film festivals in the U.S. He is a Professor of Practice at the American University in Cairo.

### **Zakariya, Mohamed**

An engineer by training, Mohamed Zakariya is now an award-winning Arabic calligrapher whose work is displayed all over the United States. In 2001, he designed the Eid holiday stamp for the United States Postal Service and in 2002, he was featured in the PBS documentary 'Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet'.

## *South America*

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#### — GUYANA —

### **Shah, Ryhaan**

Ryhaan Shah is considered to be among the best contemporary writers in Guyana and the Caribbean, best known for her 2005 novel *A Silent Life*. Shah is also an active public figure as the president of the Guyanese Indian Heritage Association.

# QUR'AN RECITORS

## *Middle East & North Africa*

### — EGYPT —

#### **Tiblawi, Sheikh Mohammad**

Tiblawi is the deputy of The Association of Qur'an Reciters and the main reciter of Al-Azhar University. He gained popularity in the Middle East after studying at Al-Azhar and reciting the Qur'an on Egyptian television in 1956. He is widely recognized as a leading reciter of the Qur'an.

### — KUWAIT —

#### **Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid**

Al-Afasy is an imam at Masjid Al-Kabir in Kuwait, and is also a singer of Arabic language nasheed. He has gained international acclaim through his innovative use of technology to promote Islam through two satellite channels, a website ([www.alafasy.me](http://www.alafasy.me)), and videos on YouTube.

### — SAUDI ARABIA —

#### **Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Sa'd ibn Sa'id**

Al-Ghamdi has served as imam to Muslim communities across the globe and is currently the imam of Kanoo Mosque in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. Al-Ghamdi has studied Usul ad Din (fundamentals of religion) and isnaad (chain of narration of Hadith) and is recognized as an influential Saudi theologian.

#### **Al-Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmed Ali**

Al-Ajmi is a Qur'an reciter from Khobar Province in Saudi Arabia. Prior to gaining prominence for his recitation style as an imam at mosques in Khobar

and Jeddah, he studied Qur'anic interpretation in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

#### **Al-Mu'ayqali, Sheikh Mahir bin Hamad**

Al-Mu'ayqali is an imam at the Grand Mosque in Mecca. He left his career as a mathematics teacher to become a scholar in Mecca and is now a popular preacher and teacher of Qur'anic studies.

#### **Al-Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr**

Al-Shatri is an imam in Jeddah, and a leading reciter of the Qur'an. Although he studied accounting, he has become increasingly influential for his recitation of the Qur'an at international Islamic events and particularly across the Middle East and in Saudi Arabia.

#### **Al-Shuraim, Sheikh Abu Ibrahim Sa'ud Ibn Muhammad**

Al-Shuraim is a leading reciter of the Qur'an known for his unique recitation style across the world. He formally studied Usul ad Din (fundamentals of religion) in Saudi Arabia, before becoming a teacher, and subsequently became imam of the Grand Mosque in Mecca.

#### **Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul Rahman**

Read bio on page 100 in 'Honorable Mentions'

## *Asia*

### — INDONESIA —

#### **Ulfah, Hajjah Maria**

Hajjah Maria Ulfah is an internationally acclaimed reciter of the Holy Qur'an and is the first woman to win an international Qur'an recitation competition. She has popularized the Egyptian style of recitation and currently serves as director of the women's department of the Institute for Qur'an Study in Indonesia. She also lectures at the National Islamic University in Indonesia.

### — AUSTRIA —

#### **Podojak, Hafiz Senad**

Hafiz Podojak was born in Bosnia and has won numerous awards for Qur'anic recitation. He is active in the community and was recently appointed to teach Islamic religious instruction in public schools. He is a highly distinguished member of Austria's Muslim Community.

### — CROATIA —

#### **Alili, Hafiz Aziz**

Alili is a Macedonian who was trained in Qur'anic recitation in Sarajevo. He is increasingly influential for his nasheed and more so for his distinct style of recitation. He is currently the imam of Medžlis Islamske Zajednice in Zagreb, Croatia.

### — TURKEY —

#### **Günesdogdu, Mustafa Özcan**

Mustafa Özcan Günesdogdu is an acclaimed Qur'an recitor of Turkish descent who is based in Germany. His participation in interational recitation competitions has made him one of the most popular reciters in the world. He has published a German translation of the Qur'an in an album released in 2003, is a member of a nasheed group which performs across Europe and has been a reciter and teacher of Qur'an for over 25 years.

## Altafsir.com

**ALTAFSIR.COM** is a completely free, non-profit website providing access to the largest and greatest online collection of Qur'anic Commentary (*tafsir* or *tafseer*), translation, recitation and essential resources in the world.

It was begun in 2001 by the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, Jordan, being the brainchild of H.R.H. Prince Ghazi, the Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to H.M. King Abdullah II. Today the website is fully operational in Arabic and English and provides the original Arabic texts of 150 or more books of Qur'anic Commentary, Interpretation and Explanation (*tafsir* or *tafseer*), recitation (*tajwid*) tutorials and hadith collections, and other fields, pertaining to the study of Qur'anic exegesis. Translations of the meanings of the Qur'an are currently available in 24 different languages, and in several cases more than one translation is available. The site also includes audio Qur'an recitations; resources on Qur'an syntax; resources on the Contexts of Revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*); resources on the meanings of words found in the Qur'an, and other works on the Qur'anic sciences. It contains over a million pages

of Qur'anic Commentary and translation. Some of the texts presented here exist only as manuscripts and have never previously been published in book form despite their historical importance and influence. Altafsir.com is thus a complete website for the study of the Qur'anic Sciences.

In addition to presenting the standard Classical and Modern Commentaries on the Holy Qur'an (*tafsir* or *tafseer*) texts of all eight schools of jurisprudence, the site also contains works of various mystical, philosophical, linguistic and theological currents. Moreover, the first time in one place, comparative studies between the Shafi'i, Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali, Ja'fari, Zaydi, Ibadi and Thahiri schools can be carried out complete with multi-screen displays and search programs.

In 2012 altafsir.com added the highly praised "Love in the Holy Qur'an" as a free downloadable pdf, and received 8 million visits bringing the total number of visits to over 27 million visitors.

**8 MILLION**

The number of visitors to altafsir.com in 2012

## MEDIA

### *Middle East & North Africa*

#### — EGYPT —

##### **Heikal, Mohamed Hassanein**

A leading Egyptian journalist, he has been a respected commentator on Arab affairs for more than 50 years. He was considered a close confidant of Gamal Abdul Nasser and his weekly column in *Al-Ahram* was considered to reflect Nasser's views. Recently, his lecture series on Al-Jazeera has given him an even greater platform in the Arab World.

##### **Howeidy, Dr Fahmy**

Howeidy is one of the leading columnists in the Arab World. He writes for the Egyptian daily *Al-Ahram*, where he is the deputy editor-in-chief; his articles, however, are syndicated to seven other Arabic publications. Howeidy is influential both through his popularity and the fact that he has highlighted issues concerning Muslim communities outside the Arab World in groundbreaking work on Chinese, Bosnian, and Senegalese Muslims, among others. Muslims appreciate and respond well to Howeidy's use of Islam as a frame of reference in his articles.

#### — KUWAIT —

##### **Al-Mutawa, Dr Naif**

Dr Naif Al-Mutawa is founder and CEO of Teshkeel Media Group and creator of the popular Islamic-themed comic series 'The 99'. *Forbes* named "The 99" as one of the top 20 trends sweeping the globe. He has been named as one of *WEF's* Young Global Leaders for 2011. In addition to having authored multiple children's books, Al-Mutawa holds a PhD in clinical psychology and has practiced in the field for many years.

##### **Al-Mutawa, Jassem**

Jassem Al-Mutawa is the president of Iqra satellite channel; an Islamic TV channel presenting programs on everyday life problems concerning spiritual, cultural, social and economic issues from a modern Islamic perspective.

##### **Sweidan, Sheikh Dr Tariq**

Tariq Sweidan is the CEO and owner of Gulf Innovation Group in Kuwait and the general manager of Al-Resalah Satellite TV. An entrepreneur and TV personality (his shows ranking among the highest in the Middle East) Sweidan is also prominent as a motivational speaker and author of books on Islam.

#### — LEBANON —

##### **Jaber, Dr Ali**

Dr Ali Jaber is a prominent figure in Lebanese and Arab media. Jaber has held several significant positions in the world of Arab media and participated in the launch of several important television channels. He is also Dean of the Muhammad bin Rashed College for Media at the American University in Dubai. Currently, Jaber is one of three panel judges on *Arabs Got Talent*, a smash hit program showcasing talent from all over the Arab World.

#### — PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES —

##### **Khanfar, Waddah**

Khanfar was the director general of the Al-Jazeera network from 2006–2011. He began his career as a war correspondent and was instrumental in carving out Al-Jazeera's position as the most watched and most respected news network in the Middle East. The network has recently expanded into other markets with Al-Jazeera English. Al-Jazeera's ethical decision to interview Israeli officials has been groundbreaking (in the Arab World) in promoting the idea that all perspectives should be broadcast.

##### **Omer, Mohammed**

An award-winning journalist, Mohammed Omer has been credited with reporting on the crisis in Gaza for major media outlets. He was raised in Rafah refugee camp and despite calamities faced by his family—his father was imprisoned, his teenage brother was killed, his mother was injured in a demolition—he dedicates himself to journalism and reporting on the crisis. He is the recipient of the 2008 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism.

#### — QATAR —

##### **Al-Ruwaini, Nashwa**

Al-Ruwaini worked for Qatar TV, and MBC before establishing her own production company, Pyramedia Ltd. Pyramedia is one of the largest and most

successful production companies in the region producing some of the highest rated TV shows including the ‘Million’s Poet’ and ‘Prince of Poets’ TV competitions on Abu Dhabi TV and her self titled ‘Nashwa’ talk show on Dubai TV.

— UNITED ARAB EMIRATES —

**Al-Awadhi, H.E. Najla**

H.E. Najla Al-Awadhi is a former Member of Parliament of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and was the CEO of Channels at Dubai Media Incorporated (DMI) for over a decade. Since 2007 she has been a regular columnist for local newspapers in the UAE. Her articles cover a range of socio-economic topics, including women’s rights, democracy, social justice, cultural perspectives, and education challenges throughout the Middle East.

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## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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— SOUTH AFRICA —

**Haffajee, Ferial**

Haffajee is editor of the City Press newspaper and former editor of the Mail and Guardian; She was the first non-white woman, and first Muslim woman to become the editor of a major daily newspaper in South Africa.

**Morton, Shafiq**

Shafiq Morton is an award-winning journalist, photographer and presenter of the current-affairs program ‘Drivertime Show’ on the Muslim radio station Voice of the Cape.

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## *Asia*

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— AFGHANISTAN —

**Mohseni, Saad**

Mohseni is a successful businessman and the founder and head of the Moby Group, Afghanistan’s largest media company which has interests in television, radio, print, production, online news services, directories, IT&T, and retail. He was named as one of the 100 most influential people by Time in 2011.

— INDONESIA —

**Bayuni, Endy M.**

Bayuni is the chief editor of The Jakarta Post; Indonesia’s largest and most popular daily English-language newspaper.

**Mohammad, Goenawan**

Goenawan Mohammad is a writer, editor, activist, and award-winning journalist. He is the founder and editor of Tempo Magazine, Indonesia’s most widely circulated weekly.

— PAKISTAN —

**Hamid, Zaid**

One of the most influential television personalities in Pakistan, Zaid Hamid is a security consultant and strategic defense analyst by profession. He is also a popular political commentator, and is the founder of Brass Tacks, a Pakistani think tank on global politics. Hamid also hosts ‘BrassTacks with Zaid Hamid’ on News1 Channel Although he has been deemed by some as a conspiracy theorist, he maintains a substantial audience.

**Shakil-ur-Rahman, Mir**

Shakil-ur-Rahman is the owner of the Independent Media Corporation, Pakistan’s largest media conglomerate. He is also currently serving as president of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society. The Geo TV network and the Jang Group are both under this umbrella organization. Shakil-ur-Rahman is also the chief executive and editor-in-chief of the Jang Group, which publishes a number of newspapers and magazines in Urdu and English.

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## *Europe*

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— TURKEY —

**Dumanli, Ekrem**

Ekrem Dumanli is the editor-in-chief of Zaman, a popular Turkish daily newspaper with close ties to the Gülen movement. He has published five books and has written a play.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Atwan, Abdel Bari**

Abdel Bari Atwan is a prominent Palestinian-Brit-

## North America

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### — CANADA —

#### **Baksh, Nazim**

Baksh is a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) television and radio producer specializing in root causes of terrorism. He also covers issues relating to traditional Islam. He is a former Massey Fellow and has produced the international affairs radio program 'Dispatches' since 2000.

### — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

#### **Henry, Aisha Gray**

Aisha Gray Henry (formerly Aisha Gouverneur) is the founder of the Islamic Texts Society and director of the non-profit, charitable foundation and publishing company Fons Vitae. Gouverneur is the co-writer of *The Life of the Prophet Muhammad* (2003).

#### **Mandvi, Aasif**

Aasif Mandvi participates the popular American show *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart. Throughout his career. He is the main voice of Muslims on hugely popular shows where he often exposes and mocks the fears of islamaphobia to a large viewership.

#### **Musaji, Sheila**

Sheila Musaji runs the influential *The American Muslim* (TAM) online publication in which she writes about and documents resources on a wide variety of issues. She is especially popular for her work dispelling misconceptions about Islam, and her rebuttals of Islamophobes. A Muslim for over 40 years, she has always been active in the Islamic and interfaith communities and frequently speaks at churches, schools, service organizations and synagogues about Islam.

#### **Zakaria, Fareed**

Fareed Zakaria is one of the United States' foremost public intellectuals. He hosts CNN's *Fareed Zakaria GPS*, is Editor-at-Large for *TIME Magazine*, and a *Washington Post* columnist. He was editor of *Newsweek International* and of *Foreign Affairs* and has recently published *'The Post-American World: Release 2.0'*, an expanded version of his international bestseller. His articles can be read on his website: [www.FareedZakaria.com](http://www.FareedZakaria.com).

ish journalist and editor-in-chief of the major daily Arabic newspaper *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*. An expert on Middle Eastern and current affairs, Atwan is a leading writer and commentator, making regular appearances as a media consultant on major news networks.

#### **Harrath, Mohammad Ali**

Mohammad Ali Harrath was exiled from Tunisia and found a home in the UK where he founded the *Islam Channel* in 2004. The *Islam Channel* broadcasts to over 130 countries and is, according to Home Office statistics, the most watched channel by Muslims in the UK. He also organised the first *Global Peace and Unity* event in 2005, which now attracts over 50,000 members of the public annually. He has encouraged Muslims in British society to participate in civic politics by being one of the founding trustees of *ENGAGE*.

#### **Joseph, Sarah**

Sarah Joseph is the CEO of *Emel Magazine*. She has become influential as a commentator on Islam in Britain through her work as a speaker, publisher and broadcaster over the past decade. Her novel idea of creating a Muslim lifestyle magazine that focuses on the lives of everyday people has played a significant part in changing the expectations of British Muslims with regards to Muslim publications. *Emel* also commands a readership of interested non-Muslims.

#### **Khan, Rizwan**

Rizwan Khan—known more commonly as Riz Khan—is a British television news reporter. He gained international prominence while working for the *BBC* and *CNN* in senior anchor positions, before moving to *Al-Jazeera English*, where he currently hosts his own political talk show. He was born in the former South Yemen.

#### **Omaar, Rageh**

Rageh Omaar is a television news presenter and writer who was stationed in Iraq and South Africa. He was the world affairs correspondent for the *BBC* from 1991 until 2006 when he moved to *Al-Jazeera English*, where he currently presents the documentary series *'Witness'*. Omaar also hosts his own show called *'The Rageh Omaar Report.'*

# CELEBRITIES & SPORTS

## *Middle East & North Africa*

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### — EGYPT —

#### **Shehata, Hassan**

Affectionately known by Egyptian soccer fans as El Me'alem (The Master) Shehata was the Egyptian national football team's longest serving manager. He led his team to three consecutive African Nations trophies, the longest winning streak in the tournament's history.

### — JORDAN —

#### **H.R.H. Prince Ali bin Al-Hussein**

His Royal Highness Prince Ali, son of late King Hussein and brother of Jordan's King Abdullah, has been the Vice President of FIFA for Asia since January 2011. He played a major role in lifting FIFA's ban on the hijab in women's football. In Jordan he successfully took the youth team to the FIFA World Cup finals in 2007 and also took three Jordanian national teams to the Asian finals in 2010. He also assisted in enhancing the educational and cultural values of sports by spreading football centers across the Kingdom. Prince Ali holds the rank of Brigadier in the Jordanian Armed Forces, where he served as a pathfinder and earned his military freefall parachute wings. He is married to Rym Brahimi, daughter of Algerian veteran UN envoy and advisor, Lakhdar Brahimi.

### — MOROCCO —

#### **El Guerrouj, Hicham**

Known as the "King of the Mile" El Guerrouj is a double Olympic gold medal winning middle distance runner. He follows in the footsteps of track legend Said Aouita and similarly has inspired many of his fellow countrymen and women to lead more active lifestyles. Much decorated as a humanitarian, El Guerrouj is a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. He has also received a humanitarian award from the IAAF.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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### — SOUTH AFRICA —

#### **Amla, Hashim**

Amla is a South African cricketer. In 2004 he became the first South African team player of Indian descent. As a devout Muslim, he has actively campaigned to remove all alcohol promoting logos from merchandise and playing gear.

## *Asia*

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### — CHINA —

#### **Yue, Ma**

(Master) Ma Yue is a Chinese martial artist and national champion of Wushu. His Muslim Hui family's association with martial arts goes back six generations. Yue is a two-time gold medalist in the National Chinese Traditional Wushu Championships and a graduate of the Wushu University of China. His current focus is on promoting the practice of Tai Ji.

## *Europe*

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### — FRANCE —

#### **Zidane, Zinedine**

Zidane is widely regarded as one of the greatest soccer players of all time. A son of Algerian immigrants, Zidane was the iconic player of his generation; he inspired the French national team to win the 1998 World Cup, the 2000 European Championships, as well as captaining the side that reached the 2006 World Cup final. He also had a very successful career at club level, winning trophies and accumulating a horde of individual honours including the FIFA World Player of the Year on three separate occasions. Since retiring from soccer he has organised many charity events around the world to combat AIDS, poverty and to help UNICEF.

#### **Kanoute, Frederic**

Born in France of Malian descent, Kanoute has had a long footballing career across top European teams. Outside of his footballing career he has supported

a number of philanthropic activities such as buying a \$700,000 mosque in Seville as well as setting up a charity to help children in Mali. The “Sakina children’s village” was opened in September 2010 with space to house over 100 orphans.

— UNITED KINGDOM —

**Farah, Mohammed**

Mohammed ‘Mo’ Farah is an athlete who won two olympic gold medals (in the 5,000 and 10,000 metres track events) for the UK in 2012. Born in Somalia, but raised in the UK from the age of 7, Mo has captured the hearts of the British public with his hard work, success, smile and warm personality. His winning celebration, the ‘mobot’ is mimicked internationally.

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*Oceania*

— NEW ZEALAND —

**Williams, Sonny**

Sonny Williams is an international rugby player, and current heavyweight boxing champion of New Zealand. Williams converted to Islam in 2008, and is the first Muslim to play for the legendary All Blacks.

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*North America*

— UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

**Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem**

One of the most recognised names in American sports, Abdul-Jabbar holds the NBA record for most career points. Through his distinguished career he accumulated many individual and team honours including 6 NBA titles, 6 MVP awards and a record 19 All-Star call-ups. Highly regarded as one of the greatest NBA players ever, he was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1995. Outside of basketball he is a best-selling author and has appeared in several films and made cameo appearances in many sitcoms.

**Ali, Muhammad**

Muhammad Ali is a legendary three-time world heavyweight boxing champion who was crowned Sportsman of the Century in 1999 by ‘Sports Illustrated’. He was an extremely important figure in the civil rights movement in the United States, who used his talent and his wit to draw public awareness to the inequality in American society. He has remained a figure of great influence, commenting on injustices where he sees them. Now, in retirement, he travels throughout the world promoting social justice issues.

**Bey, Yasiin**

Formally known as Mos Def (born Dante Terrell Smith), Bey is a hip-hop artist who has recently become more popular for his acting career where he received Emmy and Golden Globe nominations to go along with his 6 Grammy award nominations. He is noted for his social-conscious music which often discuss US foreign policy as well as the plight of the poor, and oppressed.

**Oz, Dr Mehmet**

Mehmet Oz is a cardiothoracic surgeon who became increasingly influential as a frequent guest on the Oprah Winfrey Show. He is professor of Cardiac Surgery at Columbia University, leads numerous organizations and charities, and has co-authored bestselling books on health and wellness which come up to approximately nine million in print. Oz was frequently featured on Oprah Winfrey’s satellite radio channel and currently hosts his own talk show called ‘Dr Oz’ with an average 3.5 million viewers daily. He is a regular contributor to Esquire and Time magazine and is annually listed in the Castle Connolly Guide of the top United States doctors.

# RADICALS

## *Middle East & North Africa*

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### — EGYPT —

#### **Al-Zawahiri, Ayman**

Ayman Al-Zawahiri is now the leader of Al-Qaeda following the killing of Osama bin Laden. An alleged radical since the age of 15, he went on to become the leader of Egypt's Islamic Jihad, which he merged into Al-Qaeda in 1998, becoming bin Laden's personal advisor and physician where he was credited for serving as the "real brains" of al-Qaeda

### — JORDAN —

#### **Al-Maqqadi, Abu Muhammad**

Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqadi (born Isam Mohammad Tahir Al-Barqawi) is a Jordanian-Palestinian Salafi leader who was a mentor for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (the initial leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq). Al-Maqqadi is a writer and uses the internet to spread his ideas. Al-Maqqadi was recently found guilty on terrorism charges and sentenced to 5 years in prison by a Jordanian court.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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### — SOMALIA —

#### **Zubeyr, Sheik Moktar Ali**

Sheikh Zubeyr was the leader of the Al-Shabab, the most prominent insurgent group in Somalia until

2010. It has since been severely weakened in recent months, with both Somalian and Kenyan government forces dealing severe blows compounded by the infighting between the different insurgent groups that attempted to merge together. Despite this, Sheikh Moktar (also known as Ahmed Abdi Godane) has the most influence amongst the Somali insurgents due to his close connections with Al-Qaeda that he built during his time in Afghanistan prior to the US war in 2001.

## *Asia*

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### — INDONESIA —

#### **Bashir, Abu Bakar**

Abu Bakar Bashir is an Indonesian Muslim cleric and leader of the Indonesian Mujahedeen Council (MMI). He was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment at his third trial in June 2011 on charges of planning and encouraging terrorist operations.

### — PAKISTAN —

#### **Saeed, Hafiz Muhammed**

Saeed is the most wanted man in India. He is the founder of the Pakistani based Lashkar e Taiba militant group, which is alleged to have organised the 2008 Mumbai attacks. His group is suggested to have inflicted severe casualties on Indian forces in the disputed Kashmir region as well as terror attacks on the Indian parliament house in new Delhi.



❧ The ❧  
ISSUES OF  
THE DAY

# U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

*Justice as Grand Strategy: The Missing Dimension in American Foreign Policy Toward the Muslim World*

The ancient Roman philosopher, Cicero, wisely advised that before one begins to discuss anything whatsoever one should first define terms. This would apply to perspectives and entire paradigms of thought. Perhaps the most illusive words in the world today are the terms “American” and “Muslim World”.

Was there, is there, and can there be an essence of America that constitutes its identity? This issue of identity is developed by Seyyed Hossein Nasr page 95 in his recent book, *The Garden of Truth: Vision and Promise*. He begins by generalizing that humans, both as individuals and as communities, act according to the image they have of themselves.

American foreign policy emphasizes freedom and democracy, but does this self-image translate universally? What about justice, particularly as a governing paradigm for action? Freedom and democracy both focus on the pursuit of individual human rights, but what about human responsibilities to pursue justice, from which human rights are merely a product?

President Barack Obama attempted to inaugurate a new American identity in his Cairo speech shortly after taking office. He wrote the first draft by emphasizing justice as America’s new foreign policy paradigm. In the process of vetting by the White House, however, his professional advisers and speech writers deleted the word “justice” from five successive drafts. Each time President Obama inserted it again, and each time it disappeared from the text. On the flight to Cairo he found that the final text presented to him had no mention of justice. He therefore inserted it impromptu seven times in his oral delivery. Unfortunately, that was the last time he even attempted to present justice as the basis of a rational foreign policy strategy for America.

Two questions emerge from this episode. Why has this higher dimension of policy become radioactive? Does official America have a grand strategy to pursue the image of America as a model of justice, which motivated America’s Founders?

One answer may be found in the Neo-con para-

noia of fear first formalized by Robert Strausz-Hupe in the first issue of his journal, *Orbis: A Quarterly Journal of World Affairs*. His article, “The Balance of Tomorrow”, forecast that Communism would disappear before the end of the century and that it would be replaced by a period of global chaos triggered by a population explosion in the Third World accompanied by radical ideologies and proliferating weapons of mass destruction.

Strausz-Hupe, Leo Strauss, and other grand strategists of what became known as the Neo-Conservative ideology and movement cultivated an image of themselves as the guardian of global stability in reliance primarily on the military power of the United States of America. Unfortunately, this effort to preserve the status quo, with all of its injustices, was an inherently impossible quest.

These injustices include, for example, the maintenance of artificial states divorced from organic nations composed of people with a common sense of their own history, common values in the present, and common hopes for the future.

Most dramatically these injustices include the inevitably escalating wealth gaps within and among countries that result from a system of money and banking based on privileging past accumulated wealth rather than on future profits from productive capital as collateral for credit, best explained at [www.cesj.org](http://www.cesj.org) and [www.americanrevolutionaryparty.us](http://www.americanrevolutionaryparty.us). Reversing these wealth gaps requires institutional reform of money and banking through a third way beyond socialism and capitalism. As a by-product, this would address a major cause of global terrorism and terrorist counter-terrorism.

Unfortunately, the seekers of truth perhaps wisely remain in the background because they know that in order to preserve their own integrity and for political reasons of public relations the truth must be compromised in action by such fictions as “nation building” and “democratic capitalism”.

The ironic dilemma of American foreign policy is that America’s attempt to maintain the alleged stability of the status quo by calling for freedom and democracy engenders an image of injustice throughout the world contrary to its own self-image. This was most clearly demonstrated by a survey conducted by a think-tank based in the United Emirates and presented at a think-tank in the Qatar Foundation, which recorded hundreds of the placards and graffiti in Syria during the so-called Arab Spring. All of them called for justice, but not a single one called for freedom and democracy.

Why this gross disconnect between American foreign policy and the rest of the world? There is a conflict of paradigms within every civilization, but in recent centuries the conflict between the spiritual and the material has been cast as a civilizational conflict between the “West and the Rest”, sometimes referred to as the “East and the Beast”. The conflict centers on the importance of justice.

Since justice resonates so well almost everywhere except in America and Europe, the question arises what is justice and what are true freedom and democracy.

American positivist law, which has reigned since the time of America’s Civil War in the mid-19th century, restricts the term justice to the enforcement of law created by human fiat. This differs from its opposite known as natural law, which defines justice as a system of spiritual and moral guidance based on a search for the noumenal, sapiential, perennial, and primordial truths that gave rise to the first human communities millions of years ago. When justice-based law has to be enforced its very purpose has failed.

Justice as defined by the greatest Islamic scholars in opposition to the positivist law declared by various Muslim tyrants is based upon and is a product of tawhid, which is untranslatable in English but refers to the coherence of the diversity in creation that points to the Oneness of its Creator.

Within this ontological and epistemological approach to reality all of the *maqasid al shari’ah* (the objectives of Islamic law) are interdependent in a peaceful harmony, so that each must reflect the others in a transcendent beauty. They may be divided into four principles of guidance and four of application. The guiding principles are *haqq al din*, respect for freedom of religion, *haqq al nafs*, respect for the sacredness of the human person, *haqq al nasl*, respect for the human community, and *haqq al mabid*, respect for the physical environment. The principles of application are *haqq al hurriyah*, respect for political self-determination, *haqq al mal*, respect for individual ownership of productive property, *haqq al karama*, respect for gender equity, and *haqq al ‘ilm*, respect for freedom of access to knowledge.

What then are true freedom and democracy? The ultimate freedom is freedom from ignorance of transcendent truth and justice. The ultimate in political freedom is not democracy as a technique of decision-making but recognition that democracy is a reliable guardian of human rights only in

a “republic”, which by definition acknowledges that justice is not a product of human will but must be discovered from a higher source of truth.

This concept of justice and of freedom as its product is contrasted by Seyyed Hossein Nasr with the “outwardness, forgetfulness, selfishness, and falsehood” (page 6) that gave rise to “secular humanism, rationalism, empiricism, behaviorism, and deconstructivism” (page 34).

The essence of this amalgam of power, prestige, plutocracy and rampant pleasure as the ends of existence is necessarily the opposite of justice, because it seeks meaning superficially and contextually from the bottom up, from “facts on the ground”, rather than from the essence of the whole, that is, from what Nasr calls the “spiritual hermeneutics” (pages 14, 31, and 49) and consequent awareness of the reality embodied in the existentionation (pages 15, 18, 40, and 45) of the ultimate Beyond Being (pages 6, 38-42, and 50), known as *Al Haqq*, through the emanationist metaphysics of the Great Chain of Being (page 41), which is found in all the world religions.

To my knowledge, no-one has yet studied the connection between this source of ultimate truth and its manifestation in the system of justice in classical Islamic thought known as the *maqasid* or irreducible and universal principles and purposes of Islamic jurisprudence (the *shari’ah*).

The first person to develop both of these systems systematically was Imam Jafar al Siddiq in the second Islamic century. Exploring the common origin of these two systems, the spiritual and the jurisprudential, as a source of both truth and its application through justice might illuminate the missing dimension in 21st-century American foreign policy as first articulated by the author of the American Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson.

This perhaps spiritually most profound author of the “Great American Experiment” in self-determination through one’s Ultimate Self, wrote, “No people can remain free unless they are properly educated. Education consists of teaching and learning virtues. And no people can remain virtuous unless both the personal and public lives of the individual person are infused with awareness and love of Divine Providence”, by which he meant God.

This wisdom is encapsuled in Surah 6:15 of the Qur’an, *tamaat kalimatul rabika sidqan wa ‘adlan*, “The Word of your Lord is completed and perfected in truth and justice”. Jesus Christ, ‘alayhi al salam, spoke the truths so much needed in the world to-

day, respectively in John 14:6 and 8:32, “I am the way, the truth, and the life”, and “the truth shall set you free”.

— *Dr Robert Dickson Crane*

Full professor, Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies,  
The Qatar Foundation

## ISLAMOPHOBIA

Everything about the term Islamophobia is contested: when, and where and by whom the term was first coined, whether or not it describes a “real” phenomenon, what is the precise definition, why the term might be needed, whether or not the term itself is problematic linguistically. These debates will continue, but in the meantime the term itself has become common usage as evidenced by popular magazine articles, numerous books, and serious reports and studies utilizing the term.

The Center for American Progress, Fear, Inc. report provides the best and simplest working definition: Islamophobia is an exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims that is perpetuated by negative stereotypes resulting in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from social, political, and civic life.

When Muslims raise the issue of the existence of Islamophobia, we are often accused of trying to stifle dialogue, or of undermining free speech, or told simply that we are whining in order to make ourselves into the victim rather than the perpetrator of all that is wrong with the world. We are even told that Islamophobia is a “myth” or that it is a reasonable position to hold. Whatever you believe about Islamophobia, for many of us (Muslims in America and Europe), anti-Muslim prejudice is very real.

There is a relatively small, but effective cadre of organizations and individuals devoting full time effort to promoting Islamophobic memes. SIOA/SIOE/SION are the most organized and visible of such groups, and they work cooperatively in both Europe and the United States. They focus on creating fear and passing on stereotypical, negative views about Islamic symbols (e.g. minarets, veils, mosques), rituals (e.g. circumcision, halal food), and most aggressively “Sharia”.

SIOE, the parent group of SIOA has as its motto “Racism is the lowest form of human stupidity, but Islamophobia is the height of common sense.”

The ADL describes them as promoting “a con-

spiratorial anti-Muslim agenda under the guise of fighting radical Islam.

None of this is new, as Edward Said noted: “I have not been able to discover any period in European or American history since the Middle Ages in which Islam was generally discussed or thought about outside a framework created by passion, prejudice and political interests.”

What is new is the widespread availability of the internet and social media. This effective tool allows such dedicated groups to get their Islamophobic memes to an incredibly large audience, and to bounce these memes around in an Islamophobic echo chamber. The funders, “experts”, bloggers, and media outlets work together like a well-oiled machine, producing and disseminating misinformation. They recycle and popularize the same memes over and over ultimately making them seem “credible” to their listeners who have “heard that before”.

This Islamophobic enterprise will certainly not win hearts and minds, open possibilities for dialogue, or make any of us safer. Insisting on an Islamophobic world view leaves only one option - a violent clash of civilizations, a final Crusade to convert or annihilate one group. And, one might wonder what a world without Islam would really look like.

— *Sheila Musaji,*

Founder and editor of The American Muslim quarterly journal (1989–1995), the Muslim Resource Directory of America (1990, 1992), and most recently The American Muslim online publication (since 2001).

*More information:* Read The Center for American Progress’ *Fear, Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America* (free downloads from <http://www.americanprogress.org/>) and the recently released *Islamophobia Studies Journal*, a bi-annual peer reviewed academic periodical focusing on emerging research on and analysis about the nature of Islamophobia and its impact on culture, politics, media, and the lives and experiences of Muslim people published out of UC Berkeley.

## THEATRE OF HATE

*5 Incidents attacking Islam and the Prophet (PBUH)*

1. *Danish Cartoons: 30th September, 2005*

**Details:** The Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten, commissioned 12 cartoonists to caricature the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The 12 cartoons were

published on 30 September 2005, with the one drawn by Kurt Westergaard becoming most notorious (a man wearing a turban which has a bomb with a lit fuse). Flemming Rose, Jyllands-Posten's culture editor, announced that the publication was an attempt to contribute to the debate regarding criticism of Islam and self-censorship. The same cartoons were later republished in 50 newspapers around the world.

**Flemming Rose:** Flemming Rose was Jyllands-Posten's culture editor at the time the cartoons were published. Rose interviewed Daniel Pipes, a well-known Islamophobe and neo-con, in 2004 and has shared the stage many times with well-known pseudo-scholar and Islamophobe Robert Spencer.<sup>1</sup>

**Double-Standards:** The very same newspaper had three years earlier turned down Danish illustrator Christoffer Zieler caricatures of Christ (PBUH) on the grounds that they could be offensive to readers and were not funny. The paper's Sunday editor, Jens Kaiser said: "I don't think Jyllands-Posten's readers will enjoy the drawings. As a matter of fact, I think that they will provoke an outcry. Therefore, I will not use them."<sup>2</sup> In February 2006, Jyllands-Posten also refused to publish Holocaust cartoons, which included cartoons that mocked or denied the Holocaust, offered by an Iranian newspaper.

**Reaction:** The reaction to the caricatures varied all through the Muslim world and the West. Countries like Jordan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Syria withdraw their ambassadors from Denmark. Egypt and Saudi Arabia started a campaign to boycott Danish products and Iran canceled its commercial ties with Denmark. Some Muslim protests escalated into violence with instances of police firing on crowds of protestors resulting in a total of more than 100 reported deaths. The Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen described the controversy as Denmark's worst international crisis since World War II.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Anti-Islamic film: 'Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West': 21st October,

1 <http://www.danielpipes.org/3362/flemming-rose-interview-the-threat-of-islamism>

2 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2006/feb/06/pressand-publishing.politics?INTCMP=SRCH>

3 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyllands-Posten\\_Muhammad\\_cartoons\\_controversy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyllands-Posten_Muhammad_cartoons_controversy)

**Details:** An anti-Islamic film which used clips and footage from Arabic Channels attempted to focus on the alleged threat of Islam to the West. It also compared between World War II's Nazi movement and Islamism.

Wayne Kopping directed and edited the film along with co-writer, Raphael Shore (a Canadian-Israeli scriptwriter), who was the producer of the film and is the founder of The Clarion Fund.

**The Clarion Fund:** The Clarion Fund is a pro-Israel US-based organization churning out propaganda against Islam and Iran. It has strong ties to the Israeli-Zionist group Aish HaTorah and its Advisory Board includes Frank J. Gaffney, Dr. Zuhi Jasser, Daniel Pipes, and Dr. Harold Rhode. The Clarion Fund also produced the films: 'The Third Jihad: Radical Islam's Vision For America', and 'Iranium'.

**Distribution:** The film was initially distributed on college campuses in 2007. In September 2008 the Clarion Fund, in cooperation with the Endowment for Middle East Truth, distributed 28 million DVDs of the film by mail, and in newspaper advertising supplements, predominantly in swing states. The film was included in the first issue of the publication "The Judeo-Christian View", which was sent to priests, pastors and rabbis in churches and synagogues in the United States. The DVD was also distributed to all 30,000 members of the Republican Jewish Coalition.

**Reaction:** The left-wing group Hate Hurts America, launched a campaign against the film titled "Obsession for Hate," calling it a "classic work of hate propaganda, thinly disguised as a critique of radicalism that attempts to subliminally demonize Muslims and their faith wholesale."<sup>4</sup>

Gregory Ross, spokesman for the New York-based Clarion Fund stated: "We are not telling people who to vote for, we're just saying no matter who gets in office, the American people should know radical Islam is a real threat to America. We don't feel radical Islam is getting its fair share of press."<sup>5</sup>

## 3. Fitna Movie: 6th April, 2008

**Details:** The film was written by Greet Wilders

4 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obsession:\\_Radical\\_Islam's\\_War\\_Against\\_the\\_West#Reception](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obsession:_Radical_Islam's_War_Against_the_West#Reception)

5 *ibid.*

and shows clips from the Holy Qur'an, along with newspaper clippings illustrating acts and news about crimes and violence committed by Muslims. The film aims to present Islam as a source of terrorism which espouses hatred towards all those who do not follow its teachings, violence against women, and the Islamization of the universe.

**Screenings:** In 2008, the Ruder Finn PR company arranged a conference in Jerusalem entitled "Facing Jihad" to screen the film and arrange for its distribution around the world. Those present included Geert Wilders, Arieh Eldad, Robert Spencer, Itamar Marcus, Daniel Pipes, Shlomo Sharan and John David Lewis.

During February 2009, Geert Wilders visited (or planned to visit) several European capitals to present the Fitna film. He was barred from entering the UK, but his film was nonetheless screened at the House of Lords. Wilders also presented Fitna in Rome on 13 February, 2009.

**Reaction:** Reactions varied throughout the Muslim World. Indonesia banned the use of social networks for a couple of days, while Jordan issued an arrest warrant against Wilders and called upon its people to boycott Dutch products. Several Muslim organizations and political parties organized boycotts against Dutch products.

**Dutch Prime Minister:** Jan Peter Balkenende, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands stated: "The film equates Islam with violence. We reject this interpretation. The vast majority of Muslims reject extremism and violence. In fact, the victims are often also Muslims...We therefore regret that Mr Wilders has released this film. We believe it serves no purpose other than to cause offence."

#### 4. Terry Jones: Qur'an Burning, 20th March, 2011

**Details:** Jones enjoyed worldwide media coverage thanks to his plans to burn copies of the Holy Qur'an. In early September 2010, Jones cancelled his plans and pledged never to burn a copy of the Qur'an. He then burned a copy on 20th March, 2011 at his Gainesville church.

**Reactions:** Prominent voices of condemnation included: President Obama, Hillary Clinton and, US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. The incident sparked protests all over the Muslim world, some

turned violent, leading to the deaths of more than 30 people.

**Planner:** Terry Jones led the Christliche Gemeinde Köln (CGK) in Germany from 1981 until 2008. He was accused of fraud, and Church-goers reported the following: "[Jones] didn't project the biblical values and Christianity, but always made himself the center of everything."

German press agency Deutsche Presse-Agentur reported that church members said Jones ran the Cologne church like a sect leader and used psychological pressure on members, "subordinating all activities to his will." Der Spiegel reported that Jones had been ejected by Cologne church for creating "a climate of control and fear." Following Jones' departure, the CGK closed, then reopened under new, independent, leadership.

Jones was refused entry to the UK after the anti-fascist group "Hope not Hate" petitioned the Home Secretary to ban Jones from entering the country for on the grounds of "the public good".<sup>6</sup>

#### 5. Film: Innocence of Muslims: The film's trailer was published on YouTube on July 2, 2012

**Details:** Claiming to be a trailer for a feature-length film, the 12 minute trailer ridicules the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and was released on YouTube on July 2, 2012.

**Reactions:** The film set off protests not only throughout the Muslim world but also in Europe, Australia and Canada. Some of those protests turned violent and resulted in the death of more than 50 people, including the US Ambassador to Libya. The trailer has been banned by Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Sudan. YouTube access in these countries has been blocked until, according to official statements, the film is removed. Iran has announced that it is blocking Google and Gmail who own YouTube. The trailer was labeled as having "extremist material" and was also banned in Russia by a court in Moscow. The Pakistani Railway Minister placed a personal bounty of \$100,000 for the death of the filmmaker, but this was strongly condemned by the Pakistani government.

**People behind the movie:** The film was produced by Nakoula Basseley Nakoula: an American Coptic Christian from Egypt, who has been convicted of

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry\\_Jones\\_\(pastor\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry_Jones_(pastor))

bank fraud and possession of ephedrine and hydroiodic acid. It has been reported that Nakoula used over 12 pseudonyms, one of which was “Sam Bacile”, during the film’s production. Steve Klein, the spokesperson for the movie is an enthusiastic commenter on well-known Islamophobe Pam Geller’s website. Klein also has strong ties with another Islamophobe, Joseph Nasrallah, an extremist Coptic broadcaster. American non-profit Media for Christ, which is owned by Nasrallah, obtained permits to shoot the movie in August 2011, and Nakoula provided his home as a set and paid the actors, according to government officials and those involved in the production.<sup>7</sup>

**The Actors:** The actors released a statement saying that they were misled about the movie. When recruiting for actors, the title of the movie was ‘Desert Warrior’ and there was no mention of Islam and the Prophet (PBUH). Subsequent dubbing changed all that. Two actors at least are taking legal action.

## CIRCUMCISION CONTROVERSY

On June 26, 2012 a German court in Cologne ruled that circumcising young boys represents “grievous bodily harm” and according to the court violated the child’s “fundamental right to bodily integrity”, which was more important than the parents’ rights. Obviously conscious that its ruling would be perceived – at the very least by Muslims and Jews – as an attack against freedom of religion, the court argued that religious freedom “would not be unduly impaired” because the child could later decide, as an adult whether or not to be circumcised. Of course for particularly militant atheists in the West, even parents raising their children in their own religion is a violation of children’s rights and the child should be left without religious education and then be able to choose whatever religion, or none at all, which would presumably be, for militant atheists, the preferred choice.

The court’s ruling was based on a particular case involving a four year old Muslim boy who was circumcised by a licensed German Muslim doctor. There were minor complications, renewed bleeding, so the doctor had the child taken promptly, as a pre-

caution, to a hospital and apparently the hospital, just as promptly, notified the police.

(The court, the press, the public (both German and global) and the Muslim 500 use the word “circumcision” to mean “male circumcision”. From the German legal perspective so-called “female circumcision” or “female genital cutting” is forbidden by law. And what passes for “female circumcision” in the Muslim world – which really means the African world, Egypt and Sudan as well as the Christians of Ethiopia and other non-Muslims peoples – is genital mutilation or euphemistically “genital cutting”. It is not the basically symbolic light touch of young girls that would not hinder sexual satisfaction but conceivably improve it as alluded to in Hadith, and since then rarely practiced anywhere.)<sup>8</sup>

Leaders and spokesmen for both the larger (well over a million) Muslim community in Germany and the far smaller (over 100,000) but far more influential and positively perceived Jewish community immediately and fiercely denounced the court decision in separate statements, citing the freedom of religion guaranteed in the German constitution. By September hundreds of German Muslims and Jews would hold a joint rally in Berlin.

The symbolism of the site was clear –Berlin’s Bebelplatz Square, known as the site for the infamous Nazi book burning ceremony. As early as June the spokesman for Germany’s Prime Minister Angela Merkel declared “we know a swift solution is necessary and that it can’t be put off...circumcisions that are carried out responsibly must be possible in this country without punishment.” At the time, the German parliament was in summer recess, and in the Fall the Christian Democratic Party dominated government announced it would join with the Social Democrats and the Green Party in preparing legislation that specifically legalized male circumcision but protests continued. While the Cologne court was a local court, meaning that the ruling did not apply to the other states that make up the German Federal Republic, there has been concern that a number of doctors elsewhere in Germany might refuse to carry out the procedure for fear of arrest.

In Islam it is the Prophet’s Muhammad’s (PBUH) sayings (Al-Hadith) including the most Canonical Sunni collections of Hadith, Bukhari, Abu Daoud and Ibn Hanbal that require the circumcision of

7 <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-filmmak-er-20120914,0,6397127.story>

8 <http://seekersguidance.org/blog/2012/04/mutilating-facts-setting-the-record-straight-about-female-circumcision-genital-mutilation/>

male children.<sup>9</sup> Historians have suggested that circumcision was carried out by many Arabian tribes prior to the time of the Prophet and there is even a traditional text stating that the Prophet was born without a foreskin. For the Prophet as well as for the Jews (The Bible: Genesis 17.9–14 and Leviticus 12:1-3) it is Ibrahim (Abraham) who is told by God to circumcise: for the Muslims this is implicitly a covenant with God; for the Jews it is explicit but clearly applicable, according to the biblical text (Genesis 17.6-7) to the descendants of Ishmael. And for the Muslims, again, according to canonical Hadith, the Prophet said there are five things which are part of the fitra (the innate nature of mankind, recognized by the Abrahamic Prophets), and the first is circumcision (or the 5th aspect of fitra in other versions.)

There are a few curious aspects to this contemporary issue. The first, that public opinion polls suggest most Germans supported the Cologne court, whereas the press and the political leaders, more sensitive to global opinion, possibly including concern about the reaction of Muslim countries, but clearly concerned about global memory of Hitler's systematic murder of the Jews of Europe, responded with across the mainstream political board condemning the court decision. The lead was taken by the more left wing parties, the Social Democrats and the Green party, most likely because during Nazi rule it was the leaders of the German Left that were more vigorously and extensively persecuted and murdered in the camps, than from the German Centre and conservative parties.

But elsewhere in the West, in Europe, and particularly in American and British left-liberal circles there has been a growing chorus against circumcision over the past few decades that reflects the increasing shift of liberal concerns from social justice issues to what might politely be called "lifestyle issues." In 2011, the city of San Francisco – a stronghold of American lifestyle liberalism – was about to put a measure calling for a municipal ban on circumcision on the November 2011 ballot, until a judge ruled, on a technical point, that local authorities did not have jurisdiction to regulate health care professionals.

Indeed the percentage of American children being circumcised – where it was practiced by a majority of Americans who were neither Jewish nor Muslim but who did it for hygienic reasons – had begun to decline from a highpoint of 70 per cent

by the turn of this past century. And the American Medical Association no longer recommended the practice.

Typical of the times: as early as the year 2000 an American scientist published with quite reasonable hesitation in fear of a backlash, the findings of scientifically controlled research in East Africa where two tribes, neither Muslim, but sharing similar cultural and moral practices and differing only in that one tribe practiced circumcision as an initiatory rite and the other tribe did not. The circumcised tribe had significantly lower rates of HIV infection than the uncircumcised. This finding was not widely publicized and was even ignored or dismissed by a growing number of secular opponents of circumcision. But in more recent years as reported in the U.S. government's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>10</sup> a number of scientific studies have consistently established that male circumcision not only significantly reduces the danger of HIV for heterosexual genital sex, but also for other STD (sexually transmitted diseases.)

Despite these latest findings, the undertow of opposition to circumcision continues to surface in numerous blogs in the West that echo the language of the Cologne court. What this suggests: just as recent political events in Egypt have demonstrated that when defeated in free elections, some of the most militantly secularist liberal democrats are ready to sacrifice liberal democracy for the sake of secularism, so it appears that the Faith (which is beyond a rational appreciation) in Science, almost as an alternative religion, and known as such as Scientism, will be sacrificed for the sake of militant atheism.

The age of circumcision varies in practice from region to region. The majority of Sunni Ulema have declared it should take place before the child's 10th birthday, but there are Hadith in the Sunni collections (Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi) that the Prophet circumcised his grandsons on the 7th day. No doubt for that reason, the Shi'a jurists also call for circumcision on the 7th day.

But increasingly educated urbanized Sunni Muslims in Egypt, elsewhere in the urbanized Arab and Islamic world have the procedure performed at the birth by a doctor at a hospital.

In Judaism, following the letter of the biblical version of the covenant, circumcision has always occurred on the 8th day and it is a moment of

9 [www.sunnipath.com/library/Hadith/H0003P005.1.aspx](http://www.sunnipath.com/library/Hadith/H0003P005.1.aspx) and [www.wikipedia.org/w/Khitan\\_circumcision](http://www.wikipedia.org/w/Khitan_circumcision)

10 [link: www.cdc/hiv/malecircumcision](http://link: www.cdc/hiv/malecircumcision)

great celebration. So it has been in Islam for many centuries in the Arab world, in Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia and many other Muslim countries, with sheep or cattle sacrificed on the occasion, even if the procedure takes place several years after birth. It is a pity if the positive factors of a clinical procedure in a hospital should preclude a sense of celebration that has characterised Traditional Islam.

As for adult male converts there are different understandings in Hadith and within the schools of law; in some citations circumcision is mandatory and in other citations it is not. Of course Muslim converts of Jewish origin since the time of the Prophet and the sahaba (Companions of the Prophet) never have been concerned with that problem.

—S. Abdallah Schleifer  
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## INTERFAITH

While most media coverage of interfaith deals with interfaith conflicts there have been significant progress in interfaith dialogue. Amongst the more prominent projects are the following:

### A Common Word (ACW)

The ACW interfaith initiative celebrated its 5 year anniversary on October 13, 2012. Starting as an open letter from a group of 138 Muslim scholars and clerics addressed to Christian leaders everywhere, the ACW has become the catalyst behind a global bridge-building effort between Christians and Muslims. ACW focuses on the common ground between both religious communities, highlighting points of commonality found in the commandments to love God and one's neighbor; (see the recently redesigned website at: [www.ACommonWord.com](http://www.ACommonWord.com)).

### The Muslim-Catholic Forum

From November 21–23, 2011 the second Muslim-Catholic Forum was held at the Baptism Site of Jesus in Jordan. Twenty-four Catholic and twenty-four Muslim religious leaders, scholars, and educators met and in continuation of the first Catholic-Muslim Seminar held in Rome in 2008, discussed together the theme: Reason, Faith and the Human Person and issued a joint declaration surrounding

these issues.

### The World Interfaith Harmony Week

Extending the principles of A Common Word to include people of all faiths, and those with no faith, King Abdullah II of Jordan in his address to the UNGA 2010 proposed 'Love of God and Love of Neighbour', or 'Love of the Good and Love of Neighbour' to designate the first week of February, every year, as a World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW). A month later, the resolution, a brainchild of H.R.H.Prince Ghazi, the Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to H.M. King Abdullah II was adopted. The first week of February is now observed as an official week and has seen hundreds of events each year in dozens of countries with up to 50,000 attendees at the events. The second annual week, held in February 2012, saw a large increase in gatherings and the upcoming WIHW 2013 looks even more promising with the recent announcement of annual prizes, including \$25,000 for the best event.

*More information:* Download RISSC's *A Common Word: Between Us & You, 5th Anniversary Edition* for free at <http://www.ACommonWord.com>. To learn more about the WIHW visit their website at: [www.WorldInterfaithHarmonyWeek.com](http://www.WorldInterfaithHarmonyWeek.com).

*Prominent Influencers:* Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa (p. 63), Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah page 87, Habib Umar bin Hafidh page 91, H.E. Dr Mustafa Ceric (p. 96), Dr Aref Nayed (p. 97), Dr Timothy Winter (p. 98), Dr Ibrahim Kalin (p. 113), and Dr Ingrid Mattson (p. 114).

## JERUSALEM

Since the very beginning of the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, the holy sites of the Old City of Jerusalem have been under attack, particularly Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, one of Islam's three holiest sites. The explicit goal of these attacks and violations is to build the 'third temple' on the site of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa.

### Attacks & Violations

In recent years economic, social, political and physical attacks on Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa have intensified. Calls for the demolition of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, once the preserve of extremists and fundamentalists,

have now become pervasive, commonplace and to be found even in mainstream media. This, coupled with an almost daily violation of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa by violent settlers and their ilk make the partition or even destruction of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa a distinct possibility. The partition of the Ibrahim Mosque into Jewish and Muslim parts in neighbouring Hebron in the early 1990s is the blueprint for these ambitions for one of Islam's most holy and sacred sites.

### Breaking of a Taboo

On 28 February, 2012, during a meeting for the Arab League in Doha, Qatar, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas made a plea for Muslims to visit Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. On April 18, 2012, H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan, accompanied by the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Gomaa, broke what had been, in some parts of the Islamic World, a 45-year taboo by visiting Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa in order to pray there and support the beleaguered Jerusalemites. The visit was viewed as controversial in Egypt, but set off a change of public opinion in the Islamic World. During the trip to Jerusalem, the Prince and the Grand Mufti also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This visit was much appreciated by the Christian community of Jerusalem.

### Role of H.M. King Abdullah II

H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan is the custodian of the Muslim holy sites in the city of Jerusalem. He has gone on record in March 2010 to condemn Israel's inclusion of West Bank religious sites on its national heritage list. The Jordanian Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ministry announced in 2010 a donation of over 2 million Jordanian Dinars from H.M. King Abdullah II for projects around the Al-Aqsa compound.

*More information:* Read Dr Wasfi Kailani's *Why Should Muslims Visit Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa?* and *Keys to Jerusalem* (free downloads from [www.rissc.jo](http://www.rissc.jo)).

*Prominent Influencers:* HM King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein (p. 49), Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa (p. 63), Habib Ali Al-Jifri (p. 93), Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (p. 67), Sheikh Dr Ikrima Sa'id Sabri (p. 125), and Dr Sari Nusseibeh (p. 119).

## PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

On Friday 23 September, 2011 at the UN headquarters in New York, President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority submitted a request for formal recognition of a Palestinian state along pre-1967 lines. Although this move has the support of most members of the UN, the US vowed to veto it. The statehood bid at the UN has not been met with approval by all. Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip, criticized Abbas for accepting pre-1967 borders, and thus foregoing 80% of Palestinian land. The Israeli Prime Minister dismissed the whole process. Apart from these two reactions, most other responses have been overwhelmingly in favour of Abbas' move, with an estimated 80% of countries supporting the bid.

*Prominent Influencers:* HE President Mahmoud Abbas (p. 90), Ismail Haniyah (p. 119).

## GAZA

The Gaza Strip, bordering Egypt and Israel, covers approximately 25 miles by 4-7 miles and has a population of 1.7 million people. Israel withdrew its occupying force in 2005, but the Gaza Strip has been subject to a crippling economic blockade since 2007. Attempts by international peace activists to break the blockade have led to fatal confrontations with the Israeli Defence Force.

Border skirmishes between the Palestinians and Israelis happen consistently, and have in 2008-2009, and in 2012 (as of print) led to massive destruction and killing in Gaza by the combined might of the Israeli air, navy and ground forces. The 2008-09 conflict saw approximately 1,400 Palestinian and 13 Israeli deaths. There was international outcry at the number of civilians, particularly children, who were killed, and there was much evidence of the use of banned weapons (white phosphorous) by Israeli forces. The current conflict is following a similar pattern with much of Gaza being reduced to rubble, high civilian casualties, and Hamas rocket and mortar attacks targeting southern Israel. It has also fired a rocket at Jerusalem (Hamas says the target was the Israeli parliament but the rocket landed miles away.) Islamic Jihad (a more militant Gaza group) took credit for two rockets which targeted Tel Aviv

but ended up landing in the sea nearby. The Israelis say these are their “red lines” and have continued to call up reserves, with a large IDF armour and infantry force now poised at the Gaza border.

The international community has again condemned the killing of civilians, and much support has again mobilised for the people of Gaza. An unexpected source of support has been from the hacktivist group ‘Anonymous’ which has launched cyber attacks on over 700 Israeli websites.

The current conflict is being fought not just on the physical ground, but also on social-media sites, and in cyberspace.

## MASSACRE OF THE ROHINGYA MUSLIMS

According to the UN, the Rohingya Muslims are one of the most persecuted minorities in the world, and have been described: “among the world’s least wanted”. Living in the state of Rakhine (Arakan) in western Myanmar (Burma), they are a people who nobody wants. The Myanmar government classifies them as stateless Bengali Muslims, and the Bangladesh government refuses to acknowledge them. Many have fled to refugee camps in Bangladesh (where they receive no aid), or along the Thai-Myanmar border (there have been reports of boatloads of Rohingya being abandoned in the open sea). They have been subject to all kinds of persecution and recently they have become targets of violence by Rakhine Buddhists.

According to the President of the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK, 650 Rohingyas have been killed, 1,200 are missing, and more than 80,000 have been displaced since the riots. The Burmese army and police have been accused of targeting Rohingya Muslims through mass arrests and arbitrary violence. A number of monks’ organizations that played a vital role in Burma’s struggle for democracy, have taken special procedures to block any humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya community.

## DESTRUCTION OF SUFISHRINES

The past year has seen a troubling trend of systematic grave desecration done by various Wahhabi groups in Libya, Mali, and Egypt. With the fall of ruling powers resulting from the Arab Spring many Wahhabis have decided to utilize power vacuums that opened up in Libya and subsequently Mali to ravage these lands by destroying all signs of their holy sites, which according to their puritanical view are heretical, pagan-like, grave worshipping, despite the fact that the vast majority of Sunni scholars throughout history have held them to be valid and even praiseworthy to maintain. Spurred on by some popular scholars in Saudi Arabia the trend continues to happen although their destruction of centuries old heritage has been condemned by all other Muslims as sacrilege.

### Libya

- March 2012 - the Tomb of a 15th-Century scholar Abdel Salam al-Asmar in Zlitan, about 160km (100 miles) south-east of Tripoli.
- Al-Shaab Al-Dahman mosque housed close to 50 Sufi graves inside and, outside, the tombs of Libyan Sufi scholar Abdullah al-Sha’ab and a martyr who fought Spanish colonialists.
- October 2011 - Desecration of the Al-Masry shrine in Tripoli
- In January 2012 - fanatics wrecked the cemetery of Sidi Ubaid in Benghazi, stealing 31 corpses
- August 2012 - digging out the blessed resting place of Hazrat Shaykh Ahmad Zaruq

### Mali

- Tomb of Sidi Mahmoud who died in 955 A.D
- July 2012 - Sidi Mokhtar Ben Sidi Mohammad and Alpha Moya Lamtouni
- Ansar Dine tore down one of the doors of the 15th century Sidi Yahya mosque.
- September 2012 - The destruction of the tomb of Almirou Mahamane Assidiki in Goundam

### Pakistan

- 2010 - extremists bombed the shrine of well-

known sufi master and wali, Hazrat Data Ganj Baksh Ali Hujweri, in Lahore, Pakistan, killing 42 people.

- In April 2011, during the annual festival at a large Sufi shrine in southern Punjab in Pakistan, two suicide bombers set off an explosion killing more than 40 worshippers and injuring hundreds more.

## Egypt

- April 2011 - in the Egyptian town of Qalyoub, armed with crowbars and sledgehammers, two dozen salafi fanatics arrived at the Sidi Abdel Rahman shrine in the middle of the night aiming to smash it to pieces. Five other shrines in Qalyoub were destroyed soon after Hosni Mubarak's fall from power.
- In November 2012 a Salafi cleric called on Egyptians to destroy all ancient Egyptian landmarks, including the popular Sphinx and pyramids: the vital bloodline of Egyptian tourism revenue.

In addition to this destruction, one can add the tragic assassination in August 2012 of Said Afandi, the Muslim Sufi leader of Dagestan. An outspoken critic of Wahhabism, the leader was murdered by a female suicide-bomber.

# THE FIGHT FOR AL-AZHAR

Al-Azhar University is the oldest university in the world (some say that the Qarwiyyin University in Morocco is older) being founded in 975CE. It is also the largest university in the world with about 500,000 students in its university campuses and another 1.5 million students in its schools. In addition, it runs the accreditation programs for hundreds of Islamic schools and universities all over the world. Added to this is the fact that over 45,000 of Egypt's 110,000 mosques are owned and run by Al-Azhar (and their preachers are Azharis – graduates of Al-Azhar).

The Grand Imam of the Azhar (who appoints the head of the University and heads the Higher Council of the Azhar—currently Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb) is a lifetime appointment, that once appointed, cannot be removed even by the President of Egypt. The Grand Imam is considered the highest religious highest authority of the Sunni world.

(90% of the world's 1.7 billion Muslims are Sunni).

All foreign students studying at the Azhar study for free. There are perhaps 75,000 foreign graduates from religious sciences colleges in Egypt alone all over the world. These graduates form the religious elite of the entire Islamic world.

Most important of all, the Azhar is the bastion of traditional, orthodox, moderate Sunni Islam, i.e. the Islam of Ash'arite-Maturidian doctrine, Sufi practice and 'four Madhhab' (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali) Jurisprudence. In other words, the Azhar is the spiritual and intellectual home of 90% of Sunni Islam (i.e. of 1.7 billion Muslims all over the world): of all Sunnis except Salafis, Muslim Brotherhood and Secularists. The Azhar student body is 95% traditional, and the teaching staff is 99.9% traditional. The Azhar openly and regularly criticizes and dismisses Salafi thought.

So important is the Azhar that the previous Egyptian (Mubarak) government did not allow any foreign funding (especially from Saudi Arabia or the Gulf) to the Azhar—in order not to allow any outside influence. It regarded the Azhar as one of Egypt's greatest strategic assets, and paid US \$ 800 million from the national budget to the Azhar annually. That was not nearly enough for the Azhar to reach its full potential, but given Egypt's impoverishment, it shows how importantly the government regarded it.

It is impossible to overstate the Azhar's importance and influence in the Islamic world. It is the single most important reason—perhaps the only serious factor—in keeping heavily-funded Salafi thought down to less than 10% of the Sunni world, despite all the Salafi money and the impoverishment of traditional Muslims. (Salafis are fundamentalists, but not militants as such. Nevertheless, militant fundamentalism is largely an offshoot of Salafism).

In short: The Azhar is the Harvard-Yale-Princeton-Oxford-Cambridge-Sorbonne-cum-Vatican-and-Catholic-Church of the Sunni world (i.e. for 90% of Islam's 1.65 billion Muslims):

The Muslim Brotherhood has publicly stated that they want to 'reform' the Azhar, the Egypt Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Grand Mufti directorate. In 2011, they stated they want these more than they want the Presidency of Egypt. Even if they do not get direct control of the Azhar, they will likely seek to control it indirectly by controlling its government funding or by parliamentary legislation.

If the Muslim Brotherhood gain control of the

Azhar and the Salafis gain control of the Fatwa council, it will mean a fundamental change for Islam in Egypt, and beyond, with the oldest and most powerful university in the world having its classical Islamic Asharite doctrine replaced by Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi ideas. Perhaps as a sign of things to come, on 16 November, 2012, Shaykh Qaradawi, the spiritual guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, delivered his first ever Friday Khutbah (sermon) at the Al-Azhar mosque. Thus, the battle for control of the Islamic World's greatest institution, the Azhar, and all this implies, has begun in earnest.

*Prominent Influencers:* H.E. President Mohamed Morsi (p. 57), H.E. Sh. Ahmad Al-Tayyeb (p. 51), Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa (p. 63),

## THE INTEGRAL CHAIRS

*The International Initiative for the Islamic Integral Professorial Chairs.*

The sciences of traditional Islamic knowledge are very poorly understood in the Islamic World, and taught only in selective, abbreviated versions. Fundamentalism increasingly rules the mosques while secular academic methodologies rule the institutes of learning in the Islamic World. Even in the West, though Muslims have donated hundreds of millions of dollars to create professorial chairs and academic centres in leading western universities, these chairs and centres are invariably run or occupied by non-Muslims (or secular Muslims), and so the centres and chairs—funded by Muslims!—wind up being hostile, or at least unhelpful, to traditional Islam. This situation is leading to intellectual and spiritual impoverishment in the Islamic World, a rise in fundamentalism, and ironically, at the same time, a rise in secularism.

The purpose of this initiative is to restore knowledge and teaching of traditional Islamic orthodox high culture and scholarship in philosophy, theology, mysticism, jurisprudence, Qur'anic exegesis, sociology, history and Arabic language and grammar in the Islamic World in combination with traditional Islamic teaching and preaching methods. The goal of this initiative is to set up around 50 Integral Chairs in the Islamic World each as a *waqf* (religious endowment) in mosques and universities

combined, occupied by practicing Muslim scholars, and dedicated to the intellectual and spiritual legacy of the greatest Muslim scholars and sages. Thereafter, an international institute to connect and support their activities must be established.

The Integrals Chairs project, the brainchild of H.R.H. Prince Ghazi, the Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to H.M. King Abdullah II, was officially launched on January 30, 2012 in honor of the 50th birthday of H.M. King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein (p. 49), under whose name the waqfs for the first two chairs were established. The first chair, *The Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Ghazali's Work at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds University* will formally launch in January 2013 with Professor Mustafa Abu Sway (p. 103) as the first Integral Chair along with an Academic Board that consists of H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, H.E. Sheikh Ali Gomaa (p. 63), H.E. Sheikh Dr Muhammad Said al-Bouti (p. 86), Habib Omar bin Hafiz (p. 91), Habib Ali Al-Jifri (p. 93), and others. For further information see [www.rissc.jo](http://www.rissc.jo).



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APPENDIX

Country/Territory	UN Subregion	Total Population	Total Muslim	% Muslims
Afghanistan	South-Central Asia	33,397,058	33,330,264	99.8
Albania	Southern Europe	3,227,373	2,649,673	82.1
Algeria	Northern Africa	36,485,828	35,829,083	98.2
American Samoa	Polynesia	70,680	71	0.1
Andorra	Southern Europe	87,518	963	1.1
Angola	Middle Africa	20,162,517	201,625	1.0
Anguilla	Caribbean	15,911	48	0.3
Antigua and Barbuda	Caribbean	90,510	543	0.6
Argentina	South America	41,118,986	1,027,975	2.5
Armenia	Western Asia	3,108,972	933	0.0
Aruba	Caribbean	108,587	434	0.4
Australia	Australia & N.Z.	22,918,688	435,455	1.9
Austria	Western Europe	8,428,915	480,448	5.7
Azerbaijan	Western Asia	9,421,233	9,270,493	98.4
Bahamas	Caribbean	351,275	351	0.1
Bahrain	Western Asia	1,359,485	1,103,902	81.2
Bangladesh	South-Central Asia	152,408,774	137,777,532	90.4
Barbados	Caribbean	274,530	2,471	0.9
Belarus	Eastern Europe	9,527,498	19,055	0.2
Belgium	Western Europe	10,787,788	647,267	6.0
Belize	Central America	324,292	324	0.1
Benin	Western Africa	9,351,838	2,291,200	24.5
Bermuda	Northern America	65,208	522	0.8
Bhutan	South-Central Asia	750,443	7,504	1.0
Bolivia, Plurinational State of	South America	10,248,042	2,050	0.0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Southern Europe	3,744,235	1,557,602	41.6
Botswana	Southern Africa	2,053,237	8,213	0.4
Brazil	South America	198,360,943	198,361	0.1
British Virgin Islands	Caribbean	23,705	284	1.2
Brunei Darussalam	South-Eastern Asia	412,892	214,291	51.9
Bulgaria	Eastern Europe	7,397,873	991,315	13.4
Burkina Faso	Western Africa	17,481,984	10,296,889	58.9
Burundi	Eastern Africa	8,749,387	192,487	2.2
Cambodia	South-Eastern Asia	14,478,320	231,653	1.6
Cameroon	Middle Africa	20,468,943	3,684,410	18.0
Canada	Northern America	34,674,708	970,892	2.8
Cape Verde	Western Africa	505,335	505	0.1
Cayman Islands	Caribbean	57,223	114	0.2
Central African Republic	Middle Africa	4,575,586	407,227	8.9

Country/Territory	UN Subregion	Total Population	Total Muslim	% Muslims
Chad	Middle Africa	11,830,573	6,589,629	55.7
Channel Islands	Northern Europe	154,218	7,094	4.6
Chile	South America	17,423,214	4,356	0.0
China	Eastern Asia	1,353,600,687	24,364,812	1.8
China, Hong Kong SAR	Eastern Asia	7,196,450	93,554	1.3
China, Macao SAR	Eastern Asia	567,441	567	0.1
Colombia	South America	47,550,708	14,265	0.0
Comoros	Eastern Africa	773,344	760,197	98.3
Congo	Middle Africa	4,233,063	59,263	1.4
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	Middle Africa	69,575,394	1,113,206	1.6
Cook Islands	Polynesia	20,528	21	0.1
Costa Rica	Central America	4,793,725	479	0.0
Côte d'Ivoire	Western Africa	20,594,615	7,599,413	36.9
Croatia	Southern Europe	4,387,376	57,036	1.3
Cuba	Caribbean	11,249,266	11,249	0.1
Cyprus	Western Asia	1,129,166	256,321	22.7
Czech Republic	Eastern Europe	10,565,678	4,226	0.0
Denmark	Northern Europe	5,592,738	229,302	4.1
Djibouti	Eastern Africa	922,708	895,027	97.0
Dominica	Caribbean	67,665	135	0.2
Dominican Republic	Caribbean	10,183,339	5,092	0.1
Ecuador	South America	14,864,987	2,230	0.0
Egypt	Northern Africa	83,958,369	79,508,575	94.7
El Salvador	Central America	6,264,129	2,506	0.0
Equatorial Guinea	Middle Africa	740,471	30,359	4.1
Eritrea	Eastern Africa	5,580,862	2,037,015	36.5
Estonia	Northern Europe	1,339,762	1,340	0.1
Ethiopia	Eastern Africa	86,538,534	29,250,024	33.8
Faeroe Islands	Northern Europe	49,075	49	0.1
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	South America	3,036	3	0.1
Fiji	Melanesia	875,822	55,177	6.3
Finland	Northern Europe	5,402,627	43,221	0.8
France	Western Europe	63,457,777	4,759,333	7.5
French Guiana	South America	243,172	2,189	0.9
French Polynesia	Polynesia	276,731	277	0.1
Gabon	Middle Africa	1,563,873	151,696	9.7
Gambia	Western Africa	1,824,777	1,739,012	95.3
Georgia	Western Asia	4,304,363	451,958	10.5
Germany	Western Europe	81,990,837	4,099,542	5.0

Country/Territory	UN Subregion	Total Population	Total Muslim	% Muslims
Ghana	Western Africa	25,545,939	4,112,896	16.1
Gibraltar	Southern Europe	29,278	1,171	4.0
Greece	Southern Europe	11,418,878	536,687	4.7
Greenland	Northern America	57,300	57	0.1
Grenada	Caribbean	105,303	316	0.3
Guadeloupe	Caribbean	465,282	1,861	0.4
Guam	Micronesia	184,334	184	0.1
Guatemala	Central America	15,137,569	757	0.0
Guinea	Western Africa	10,480,710	8,824,758	84.2
Guinea-Bissau	Western Africa	1,579,632	676,082	42.8
Guyana	South America	757,623	54,549	7.2
Haiti	Caribbean	10,255,644	5,128	0.1
Holy See	Southern Europe	460	2	0.5
Honduras	Central America	7,912,032	7,912	0.1
Hungary	Eastern Europe	9,949,589	29,849	0.3
Iceland	Northern Europe	328,290	328	0.1
India	South-Central Asia	1,258,350,971	183,719,242	14.6
Indonesia	South-Eastern Asia	244,769,110	215,641,586	88.1
Iran, Islamic Republic of	South-Central Asia	75,611,798	75,309,351	99.6
Iraq	Western Asia	33,703,068	33,332,334	98.9
Ireland	Northern Europe	4,588,252	49,204	1.1
Israel	Western Asia	7,694,670	1,361,957	17.7
Italy	Southern Europe	60,964,145	1,585,068	2.6
Jamaica	Caribbean	2,761,331	1,381	0.1
Japan	Eastern Asia	126,434,653	126,435	0.1
Jordan	Western Asia	6,457,260	6,379,773	98.8
Kazakhstan	South-Central Asia	16,381,297	9,239,052	56.4
Kenya	Eastern Africa	42,749,418	2,992,459	7.0
Kiribati	Micronesia	102,660	103	0.1
Korea, DPR (North)	Eastern Asia	24,553,672	4,911	0.0
Korea, Republic of (South)	Eastern Asia	48,588,326	97,177	0.2
Kuwait	Western Asia	2,891,553	2,498,302	86.4
Kyrgyzstan	South-Central Asia	5,448,085	4,837,899	88.8
Lao People's Democratic Republic	South-Eastern Asia	6,373,934	1,275	0.0
Latvia	Northern Europe	2,234,572	2,235	0.1
Lebanon	Western Asia	4,291,719	2,562,156	59.7
Lesotho	Southern Africa	2,216,850	1,108	0.1
Liberia	Western Africa	4,244,684	543,320	12.8
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Northern Africa	6,469,497	6,249,534	96.6

Country/Territory	UN Subregion	Total Population	Total Muslim	% Muslims
Liechtenstein	Western Europe	36,584	1,756	4.8
Lithuania	Northern Europe	3,292,454	3,292	0.1
Luxembourg	Western Europe	523,362	12,037	2.3
Macedonia	Southern Europe	2,066,785	721,308	34.9
Madagascar	Eastern Africa	21,928,518	241,214	1.1
Malawi	Eastern Africa	15,882,815	2,033,000	12.8
Malaysia	South-Eastern Asia	29,321,798	18,003,584	61.4
Maldives	South-Central Asia	324,313	319,124	98.4
Mali	Western Africa	16,318,897	15,078,661	92.4
Malta	Southern Europe	419,212	1,258	0.3
Man, Isle of	Northern Europe	83,739	167	0.2
Marshall Islands	Micronesia	55,717	56	0.1
Martinique	Caribbean	408,302	817	0.2
Mauritania	Western Africa	3,622,961	3,593,977	99.2
Mauritius	Eastern Africa	1,313,803	218,091	16.6
Mayotte	Eastern Africa	217,172	214,566	98.8
Mexico	Central America	116,146,768	116,147	0.1
Micronesia, Fed. States of	Micronesia	112,098	112	0.1
Moldova, Republic of	Eastern Europe	3,519,266	14,077	0.4
Monaco	Western Europe	35,444	177	0.5
Mongolia	Eastern Asia	2,844,081	125,140	4.4
Montenegro	Southern Europe	632,796	117,067	18.5
Montserrat	Caribbean	6,046	6	0.1
Morocco	Northern Africa	32,598,536	32,565,937	99.9
Mozambique	Eastern Africa	24,475,186	5,580,342	22.8
Myanmar	South-Eastern Asia	48,724,387	1,851,527	3.8
Namibia	Southern Africa	2,364,433	9,458	0.4
Nauru	Micronesia	10,370	10	0.1
Nepal	South-Central Asia	31,011,137	1,302,468	4.2
Netherlands	Western Europe	16,714,228	33,428	0.2
Netherlands Antilles	Caribbean	204,538	11,250	5.5
New Caledonia	Melanesia	258,735	7,245	2.8
New Zealand	Australia & N.Z.	4,461,257	40,151	0.9
Nicaragua	Central America	5,954,898	595	0.0
Niger	Western Africa	16,644,339	16,361,385	98.3
Nigeria	Western Africa	166,629,383	79,815,474	47.9
Niue	Polynesia	1,385	1	0.1
Northern Mariana Islands	Micronesia	62,152	435	0.7
Norway	Northern Europe	4,960,482	148,814	3.0

Country/Territory	UN Subregion	Total Population	Total Muslim	% Muslims
Oman	Western Asia	2,904,037	2,546,840	87.7
Pakistan	South-Central Asia	179,951,140	173,472,899	96.4
Palau	Micronesia	20,758	21	0.1
Palestinian Territory, Occupied	Western Asia	4,270,791	4,164,021	97.5
Panama	Central America	3,624,991	25,375	0.7
Papua New Guinea	Melanesia	7,170,112	2,151	0.0
Paraguay	South America	6,682,943	668	0.0
Peru	South America	29,733,829	595	0.0
Philippines	South-Eastern Asia	96,471,461	4,920,045	5.1
Poland	Eastern Europe	38,317,090	38,317	0.1
Portugal	Southern Europe	10,699,333	64,196	0.6
Puerto Rico	Caribbean	3,743,380	1,872	0.1
Qatar	Western Asia	1,938,754	1,502,534	77.5
Réunion	Eastern Africa	865,479	36,350	4.2
Romania	Eastern Europe	21,387,517	64,163	0.3
Russian Federation	Eastern Europe	142,703,181	16,696,272	11.7
Rwanda	Eastern Africa	11,271,786	202,892	1.8
Saint Helena, Ascension & Tristan da Cunha	Western Africa	4,005	4	0.1
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Caribbean	53,697	161	0.3
Saint Lucia	Caribbean	177,794	178	0.1
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	Northern America	6,039	12	0.2
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Caribbean	109,367	1,859	1.7
Samoa	Polynesia	184,772	185	0.1
San Marino	Southern Europe	31,945	32	0.1
Sao Tome and Principe	Middle Africa	171,878	172	0.1
Saudi Arabia	Western Asia	28,705,133	27,872,684	97.1
Senegal	Western Africa	13,107,945	12,570,519	95.9
Serbia	Southern Europe	9,846,582	364,324	3.7
Seychelles	Eastern Africa	87,169	959	1.1
Sierra Leone	Western Africa	6,126,450	4,380,412	71.5
Singapore	South-Eastern Asia	5,256,278	783,185	14.9
Slovakia	Eastern Europe	5,480,332	5,480	0.1
Slovenia	Southern Europe	2,040,057	48,961	2.4
Solomon Islands	Melanesia	566,481	283	0.1
Somalia	Eastern Africa	9,797,445	9,660,281	98.6
South Africa	Southern Africa	50,738,255	761,074	1.5
Spain	Southern Europe	46,771,596	1,075,747	2.3
Sri Lanka	South-Central Asia	21,223,550	1,804,002	8.5

Country/Territory	UN Subregion	Total Population	Total Muslim	% Muslims
Sudan	Northern Africa	45,722,083	36,577,666	80.0
Suriname	South America	534,175	84,934	15.9
Swaziland	Southern Africa	1,220,408	2,441	0.2
Sweden	Northern Europe	9,495,392	465,274	4.9
Switzerland	Western Europe	7,733,709	440,821	5.7
Syrian Arab Republic	Western Asia	21,117,690	19,597,216	92.8
Taiwan	Eastern Asia	23,291,356	23,291	0.1
Tajikistan	South-Central Asia	7,078,755	7,007,967	99.0
Thailand	South-Eastern Asia	69,892,142	4,053,744	5.8
Timor-Leste	South-Eastern Asia	1,187,194	1,187	0.1
Togo	Western Africa	6,283,092	766,537	12.2
Tokelau	Polynesia	1,136	1	0.1
Tonga	Polynesia	104,891	105	0.1
Trinidad and Tobago	Caribbean	1,350,999	78,358	5.8
Tunisia	Northern Africa	10,704,948	10,683,538	99.8
Turkey	Western Asia	74,508,771	73,465,648	98.6
Turkmenistan	South-Central Asia	5,169,660	4,823,293	93.3
Turks and Caicos Islands	Caribbean	39,761	20	0.1
Tuvalu	Polynesia	9,867	10	0.1
Uganda	Eastern Africa	35,620,977	4,274,517	12.0
Ukraine	Eastern Europe	44,940,268	404,462	0.9
United Arab Emirates	Western Asia	8,105,873	6,160,463	76.0
United Kingdom	Northern Europe	62,798,099	2,888,713	4.6
United Republic of Tanzania	Eastern Africa	47,656,367	14,249,254	29.9
United States of America	Northern America	315,791,284	2,526,330	0.8
United States Virgin Islands	Caribbean	108,590	11	0.0
Uruguay	South America	3,391,428	339	0.0
Uzbekistan	South-Central Asia	28,077,486	27,094,774	96.5
Vanuatu	Melanesia	251,674	126	0.1
Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of	South America	29,890,694	89,672	0.3
Viet Nam	South-Eastern Asia	89,730,274	179,461	0.2
Wallis and Futuna Islands	Polynesia	13,348	13	0.1
Western Sahara	Northern Africa	566,613	564,347	99.6
Yemen	Western Asia	25,569,263	25,313,570	99.0
Zambia	Eastern Africa	13,883,577	55,534	0.4
Zimbabwe	Eastern Africa	13,013,678	117,123	0.9
<b>WORLD</b>		<b>7,052,135,305</b>	<b>1,650,199,660</b>	<b>23.4</b>



❧ The ❧  
GLOSSARY

# Glossary

**Ahl Al-Bayt (or Aal Al-Bayt):** Literally, the people of the house; refers to the family of the Prophet Muhammad.

**Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Al-Jama'ah:** Literally, people of the practices of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim community.

**Al-Fatihah:** Literally, 'The Opening', this is the title for the first chapter of the Holy Qur'an which is recited as a fundamental part of Muslims' daily prayers.

**Allah:** Arabic for God.

**Aqida:** Creed. This refers to the theological and doctrinal beliefs of Muslims.

**Ash'ari:** The theological school of Sunni Orthodoxy named after the followers of the 9th century scholar Abu al Hasan Al-Ash'ari (874-936 CE).

**Awqaf:** Plural of waqf (see below).

**Azaan/Adhan:** The call to prayer.

**Bid'a:** Literally 'innovation'; this refers to the act of creating superfluous, or non-prescribed traditions in the practice of Islam. It is used in common speech as a denunciation toward those not acting in accordance with the prescriptions of Islam.

**Caliph:** The head of the entire community of Muslims, either current or in the past. Is also used by certain sects to refer to their own leader.

**Chador:** A loose cloth traditionally worn by Muslim women which usually covers the body from head to foot.

**Da'i/ Da'ee:** Missionary.

**Da'wa:** Islamic missionary work; literally 'making an invitation' to the religion.

**Emir (or Amir):** A title accorded to a leader, prince, or commander-in-chief.

**Fatwa:** Is a religious ruling issued by a mufti (a top legal scholar) regarding particulars of an issue in Islamic law based on circumstances surrounding the question such as the time, place, people, and details surrounding the issue. It is only considered binding when all scholars of that time agree upon it, which is extremely rare indeed.

**Fiqh:** Refers to the Islamic jurisprudence. A branch of shari'ah that deals mainly with the observance of rituals, morals and social legislation in Islam.

**Fiqh Al-Aqaliyaat:** Islamic legal rulings for Muslims living as minorities in foreign lands.

**Ghazal:** Poetry used for describing the beauty of the loved one as well as the emotions the poet has towards the beloved. A poetic structure consisting of rhyming couplets and a refrain, with each line sharing the same meter.

**Hadith:** Literally 'sayings'. These are a set of references to the life of the Prophet Muhammad. There are numerous Hadith, and the practice of verifying them is an Islamic scholarly practice of its own that has been carried out since the life of the Prophet.

**Hafiz (or Hafiza) Al-Qur'an:** A person who has committed the entire Qur'an to memory, and can recite the Qur'an at will. This is important in Islam because the Qur'an was originally revealed as an oral text.

**Hajj:** The pilgrimage to Mecca. It is mandatory for every Muslim who is able to do it, and can afford it. Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. The pilgrimage occurs from the 8th to 12th day of Dhu Al-Hijjah, the 12th month of the Islamic calendar.

**Halal:** Permissible. A term referring to actions or objects that are permissible according to Islamic law. Commonly refers to food items that are permissible for Muslims to eat.

**Haram:** Sanctuary.

**Hijab:** Normally refers to the headscarf worn by Muslim women but refers to both the head cover and attire worn by Muslim woman to preserve their modesty. It is consensus as being obligatory by all the classical Islamic schools of thought.

**Hijaz:** The region along the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula.

**Ibadi:** The Ibadi school has origins in and is linked to the Kharijites, but the modern day community is distinct from the 7th century Islamic sect. It was founded after the death of Prophet Muhammad and is currently practiced by a majority of Oman's Muslim population. Also found across parts of Africa.

**Ihsan:** Virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of God.

**Ijaza:** Certification. Is a certification given to a student for acquiring knowledge of a particular discipline under

the authorization of a higher authority usually by face-to-face interactions. Thus, the ability to transmit the knowledge the teacher has. This is performed under the supervision of a certified Sheikh whose chain of narrations leads to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

**Ijtihad:** Independent reasoning, or individual interpretation of the Qur'an.

**Imam:** (1) In both Sunni and Shi'a Islam an imam is the leader of congregational prayers who may also deliver the Friday prayer (Jum'a) sermon; more generally, a person of authority within the community. (2) In Shi'a Islam this exclusively refers to a series of people, descended from the Prophet Muhammad, who by lineage are considered divinely guided spiritual leaders.

**Imamate:** The position or institution, in Shi'a Islam, that is comprised of a series of divinely guided imams.

**Iman:** Faith in God.

**Islam:** Submission to God's will.

**Isnad:** The chain of narrators of the Hadith: is the list of authorities who have transmitted the sayings, actions or approbations (*badith*) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), by one of his Companions or a later authority (*tabi*). The reliability of the *isnad* is the main criteria in the validity of a hadith. Modern practices of scientific citation and historical method owe a great deal to the rigor of the *Isnad* tradition of early Muslims.

**Jihad:** Literally, struggle. An exertion of effort in any field, not just in war, in order to achieve good or prevent evil, done so for the sake of God's pleasure. The highest level of which is to overcome one's ego and lower self. It is considered a religious duty upon every Muslim.

**Ka'ba:** The large cubic structure in the Grand Mosque in Mecca, adorned in gold embroidered black fabric, referred to by Muslims as the 'House of God'. This structure marks the direction in which Muslims pray and is central to the Hajj pilgrimage.

**Khat:** Script. Refers to the Arabic calligraphy, which is the artistic practice of handwriting of Arabic alphabets depending on certain rules and principles.

**Khateeb:** refers to the person who delivers the Islamic sermon (*khutbah*) during certain occasions such as the Friday prayers, or during Eid prayers. He is usually the Imam or leader of the prayer.

**Khanqah:** a building designed specifically for gatherings of a Sufi brotherhood, or *tariqa*, and is a place for spiritual retreat and character reformation. It is also synonymous with the regional terms *ribat*, *tekke*, and *zawiya*.

**Khawarij:** A group of Muslims in early Islamic history who went against the larger community and became outsiders. A term used to describe political deviants.

**Khums:** Literally, 1/5 in Arabic; a religious tax of 1/5 of one's income owed by followers of Usuli Twelver Shi'a to a very senior cleric.

**Madhabs:** Traditional schools of Islamic legal methodology (e.g. Hanbali, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanafi, Jafari).

**Madrassa:** The Arabic word for 'school'. Can refer to a religious school.

**Majlis Al-Shura:** Consultative religio-legislative body.

**Marja/Marjaiyya:** The highest position of authority in the Usuli school of Twelver Shi'i fiqh whose authority lies after the Qur'an, the Prophets and the Imams. Also referred to as *marja taqlid*, meaning literally one who is worthy of being imitated, they have the authority to make legal decisions within the confines of Islamic law for the adherers and less-credentialed clerics.

**Masjid:** Arabic for 'mosque'.

**Maturidi:** The theological school of Sunni Orthodoxy named after the followers of the 9th century scholar Muhammad Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (853-944 CE).

**Melayu Islam Beraja:** The concept of Malay Islamic monarchy.

**Morchidat:** Literally, guides. Refers to the Moroccan cadre of trained female preachers.

**Mufti:** A Muslim legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious matters.

**Mujahid:** Someone engaged in acts of jihad.

**Muqri:** A reciter of Qur'an.

**Murid:** Follower of a Sufi guide or order.

**Mursyidul Am:** Malaysian term for religious guide.

**Mushaf:** Is the collection of sheets gathered after the death of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) representing the words of the Qur'an and referring to the physical bound volume of the Holy book.

**Mutabarrik:** Supporter or affiliate of a Sufi guide or order.

**Mu'tazili:** An almost obsolete school of Sunni Islam, popular in the 8th century, that advocates the belief that the Qur'an was created—as opposed to the Orthodox Sunni view that it is eternal and uncreated.

**Nasheed:** Islamic songs. Is the Islamic vocal music, sung

individually or by a group and sometimes accompanied by the daff. The words sung may refer to religion, history, current issues or anything related to Islam.

**Pancasila:** Indonesian concept of five basic, national principles: belief in the Oneness of God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy, and social justice.

**PBUH:** An acronym for “Peace be upon him”.

**Pesantren:** The term for Islamic schools in Indonesia.

**Qibla:** The direction in which Muslims offer their five daily prayers; the direction of the Ka’ba in Mecca.

**Ramadan:** Holy month of fasting.

**Salafi:** A movement of Sunni Muslims that places great emphasis on literal interpretation of the Qur’an and Hadith, with skepticism towards the role of human.

**Salawat:** A prayer of peace upon the Prophet (PBUH) which has many unique formulas, often consisting of the basic *Allahumma salli ala sayyidina Muhammad wa ala ahlihi wa sallim* (O God send your prayers and blessings be upon Muhammad and his family).

**Shahadatayn:** The two testimonies of faith: There is no deity but God. Muhammad is the Messenger of God. Stating these two sentences is sufficient to become a Muslim.

**Shari’a:** Literally, ‘the way to the source’, this refers to Islamic law. Islamic law is not, as is widely perceived, a standard set of written rules, but is rather an unwritten text that is interpreted by legal scholars in specific instances, drawing on the Qur’an and other reliable religious sources relevant to the tradition followed.

**Sheikh:** (1) A position of authority granted to people who are respected in society. (2) A religious official.

**Shi’a:** The second-largest denomination of Muslims referred to as Shi’atu ‘Ali or ‘party of ‘Ali,’ the fourth caliph of Islam and first imam in Shi’ism.

**Sunna:** Literally ‘the trodden path’; this refers to the ways and practices of the Prophet Muhammad. Reference to these practices can be found in the Qur’an and in the Hadith.

**Sunni:** The largest denomination of Muslims referred to as Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jama’ah or ‘people of the prophetic tradition and community’—with emphasis on

emulating the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

**Tafsir:** Interpretation of the Qur’an, either by commentary or exegesis.

**Taqiid:** The practice of following rulings without questioning the religious authority. This is a core tenet of the Usuli school of Islamic law.

**Tariqa:** any particular brotherhood of Sufisim (spiritual methodology) that leads to a path to the Divine. It consists of a group of seekers following their guide (spiritual leader), and through spiritual deeds and guidance one reaches the ultimate truth of knowing God.

**Ummah:** The collective Muslim community.

**Umrah:** The ‘lesser pilgrimage’ to Makkah. It can be performed any time of the year and has fewer rituals than the hajj.

**Usul ad Din:** The basic foundations of the Islamic religion, those of which represent creed, behavior and intellectual conduct and all are based on the rudiments of the Islamic faith.

**Velayat-e Faqih:** A position of both spiritual and temporal powers in the Republic of Iran. Literally, Guardianship of the Jurists, referring to the fact that while the Mahdi (awaited one) is in occultation, the jurists should have guardianship over the earth.

**Waqf:** A religious endowment or charitable trust.

**Zakat:** The religious obligation to annually give one-fortieth of one’s income and savings to the poor and destitute.

**Zawiya:** See ‘khanqah’ above.

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# Note on Format

- All dates are of the Common Era (CE) unless otherwise stated. The abbreviations CE (Common Era) and AH (Anno Hegirae: years after Hijra) are used for clarity with very old dates.
- Names are presented as individuals refer to themselves, or as they are most frequently used; therefore some professors and doctors do not have the honorifics Prof. and Dr in their title. This is except in the Top 50 where titles are included. Royalty and nobility are accorded their traditionally used honorifics.
- The honorific His Eminence (H.E.) is given to figures of religious importance, such as state-level Muftis or Muftis of high stature, and also to Ayatollahs. His Royal Eminence is used for the Sultan of Sokoto, who has a combination of spiritual and regal honors.
- Other honorifics are presented where they apply, such as Ambassador, Representative, and Lady, among others.
- The title His/Her Excellency (H.E.) is accorded to heads of state, heads of government, and senior diplomats only—as per established usage of these terms. Rarely, individuals wish to avoid such titles, in such cases, we have adhered to the individuals' preference.
- Names are presented surname-first for ease of navigating and indexing, except in cases where first names are more relevant—such as for some royalty.
- Spelling of names is, where possible, as the individuals spell their own name. In other cases we have adhered to the most common usage.
- Specific terms in languages other than English have been italicized, and described.
- Further explanations for terms are presented in a glossary at the rear of this publication.
- For ease of reading we have adhered to the more widespread and straightforward transliterations of Arabic words into English, such as: Sheikh, Hadith, and Ayatollah.



*Lord, make it easy  
& don't make it difficult  
~ Lord, make it end well*



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