

PERSONS  
OF THE YEAR



*The*  
**Muslim 500**

THE WORLD'S 500 MOST  
INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS

2024







بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

# *The Muslim 500*

---

THE WORLD'S 500 MOST  
INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS

---

🌀 2024 🌀

The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims, 2024  
ISBN: print: 978-9957-635-69-5

© 2023 The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre  
20 Sa'ed Bino Road, Dabuq  
PO BOX 950361  
Amman 11195, JORDAN  
www. rissc. jo

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanic, including photocopying or recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Views expressed in *The Muslim 500* do not necessarily reflect those of RISSC or its advisory board.

Set in Garamond Premiere Pro  
Printed in The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Calligraphy used throughout the book provided courtesy of www. FreeIslamicCalligraphy. com

Title page *Bismilla* by Mothana Al-Obaydi

Chief Editor: Prof S Abdallah Schleifer  
Editor: Dr Tarek Elgawhary  
Managing Editor: Mr Aftab Ahmed  
  
Editorial Board: Dr Tarek Elgawhary, Ms Lamy Al-Khraisha, Mr Moustafa Elqabbany, and Ms Zeinab Asfour  
  
Researchers: Ms Lamy Al-Khraisha, Mr Moustafa Elqabbany, Ms Zeinab Asfour, Mr Simon Hart, Ms Sarah Moore, and Haji M AbdulJaleal Nasreddin  
  
Typeset by: Haji M AbdulJaleal Nasreddin

رقم الإبداع لدى دائرة المكتبة الوطنية (2023/10/5447)

Primary Indexing data for the book

Book Title	The Muslim 500
Prepared by / staff	Royal Al -Bayt For Islamic Thought (Jordan)
Publication Data	Amman: Royal Al -Bayt For Islamic Thought • 2023
Physical Description	255 Pages .
Classification number	210.92
Descriptors	Biographies//Muslims//Islam/
Edition data	First Edition

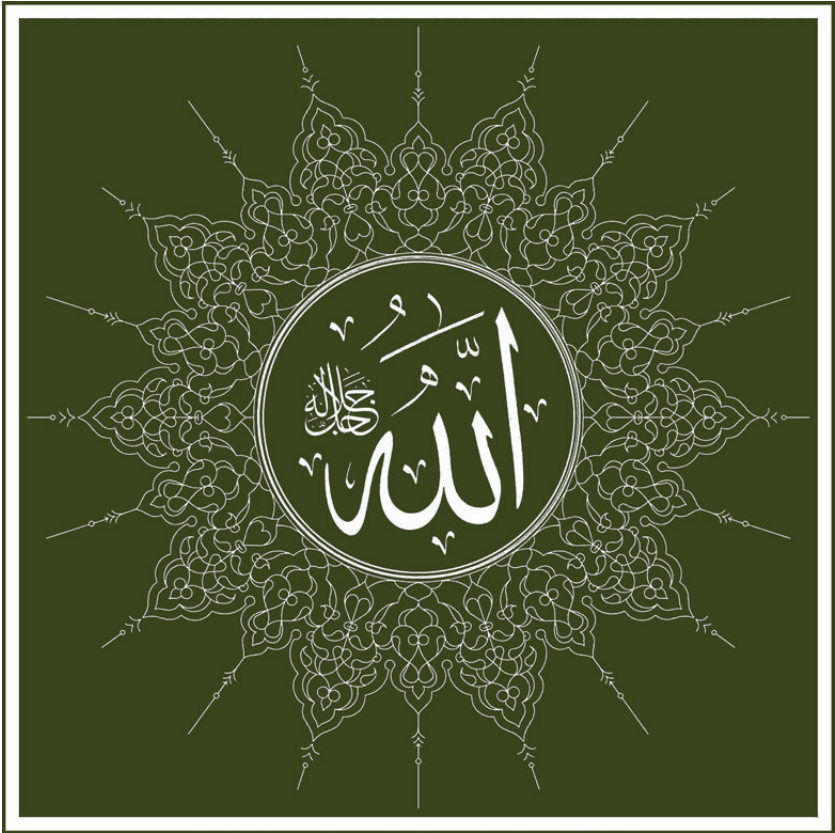
يتحمل المؤلف كامل المسؤولية القانونية عن محتوى مصنفه ولا يعترف هذا المصنف عن رأي دائرة المكتبة الوطنية.



# Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
Persons of the Year - 2024	5
A Selected Survey of the Muslim World	9
THE HOUSE OF ISLAM	21
THE TOP 50	33
HONOURABLE MENTIONS	103
THE 450 LISTS	111
Scholarly	113
Political	123
Administration of Religious Affairs	132
Preachers & Spiritual Guides	139
Philanthropy, Charity & Development	146
Social Issues	149
Business	160
Science & Technology	165
Arts & Culture	170
Qur'an Reciters	179
Media	181
Celebrities & Sports	185
Top Extremists	188
THE OBITUARIES	191
GUEST CONTRIBUTIONS	195
Islamic Philosophy, Prophetic Intelligence, and the AI Agenda	197
Osman Bakar, PhD, FASc	
Unveiling Systemic Bias: The Targeting of Muslim Charities by the Canada Revenue Agency	202
Faisal Kutty	
Muslims in Serbia	204
Mufti Dr Mevlud Dudic	
<i>"We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam"</i>	207
Shaykh Faïd Mohammed Saïd	

BOOK CORNER	211
MAJOR EVENTS	215
APPENDIX I: POPULATION STATISTICS	219
APPENDIX II: SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS	227
GLOSSARY OF ISLAMIC TERMS	233
THE INDICES	239
Index by Name	240
Index by Country	245



# INTRODUCTION



فَسَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَتَوْنَا قَوْمَ يَهُودَ إِلَى الْبَيْتِ نَقِصًا

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَ لَهُ  
مِنْ الْجَنَّةِ نِجْمًا خَيْرًا مِنْ نَجْمٍ الْعَرَبِ  
وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَ لَهُ  
مِنْ الْجَنَّةِ نِجْمًا خَيْرًا مِنْ نَجْمٍ الْعَرَبِ  
وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَ لَهُ  
مِنْ الْجَنَّةِ نِجْمًا خَيْرًا مِنْ نَجْمٍ الْعَرَبِ

فَقَضَىٰ بِهِمُ بِالْحَقِّ قَبْلَ الْحَمْدِ لِلَّهِ الْعَالَمِينَ

And those who feared their Lord will be driven to Paradise in troops, until, when they reach it, and its gates are opened and its keepers will say to them, 'Peace be to you! You are good! So enter it to abide [therein]'. ☸ And they will say: 'Praise be to God, Who has fulfilled His promise to us, and has made us inherit the land that we may settle in Paradise wherever we wish'. So how excellent is the reward of those who worked [hard]! ☸ And you will see the angels encircling all round the Throne, glorifying with praise of their Lord, and judgement will be made between them with truth, and it will be said, 'Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds' ☸

*The Troops, 73-75*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

Welcome to the fifteenth annual issue of *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims*. We are very pleased that we have made it this far and that the book has evolved as it has. We thank you for all your support and suggestions and look forward to continually receiving them.

There are approximately 2.1 billion Muslims in the world today, making up over a quarter of the world's population. 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 or Muslims. 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 shaping 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. 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 followers, the number of books written, the amount of sales etc., but more often it is not something measurable in quantitative terms and is more related to the qualitative and lasting effect of that influence. A combination of social metrics, public opinion (we have a month-long open call for nominations every year, and all suggestions are considered) and expert opinion are the basis of this attempt to measure influence. The achievements of a lifetime are given more weight than achievements within the current year. People who are trailblazers, or the lone voice in a remote area are also taken into account as we give weight to people breaking barriers and to local influence as well

as global influence. This means that our list of names will change gradually, rather than dramatically, year-on-year.

The Top 50 individuals are ranked and listed first. The remaining 450 names are then listed (not ranked) in categories of influence, with a small number also chosen to be in our Honourable Mentions section to value the notable contributions made in their fields.

Our 13 categories are:

- 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 Stars
- Extremists

The individuals are ordered in each category according to geographical region (Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, North America, South America), then in alphabetical order by country and finally by surname.

This publication combines aspects of a review of the past year, including a timeline and statistics, but it also hopes to serve as a prospective guide to the new year, much like a *Who's Who*.

## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

We have our Persons of the Year; these individuals are recognized for their significant contributions in the past year or over their lifetime.

Our editor then offers his Selected Survey of the major events which have affected the Muslim world over the past twelve months.

Then we have our regular House of Islam essay which gives an overview of Islam and its branches. An updated Top 50 and 450 lists (including Honourable Mentions) then follows.

The final part of our lists is the Obituaries section which lists the people from last year's book who have since passed away.

Our Guest Contributions section has exclusive articles covering a wide range of issues. These are sure to stimulate thought and discussion around current pressing issues.

Our Book Reviews cover some books that have been published recently. The 'Major Events' section provides a timeline of the major events that have taken place over the past year.

Appendices I and II provide us with lots of statistics. Appendix I shows total population and Muslim population by country, for all the countries in the world. Appendix II compiles a list of the most popular Facebook, Twitter, Tik Tok and Instagram Muslim users, as well as worldwide.

To give a richer visual experience we have also included several calligraphy pieces throughout the book, which we hope will serve as a beautiful reminder to pause and reflect as you go through the book. We have also added write-ups within the main body of the text about major initiatives (see the Amman Message on page 49, A Common Word on page 121, the Marrakesh Declaration on page 124, The Muslim

Council of Elders on page 114, Free Islamic Calligraphy on page 180, UN World Interfaith Harmony Week on page 152, Altafsir.com on page 163 and QuranicThought.com on page 20)

Our website [[www.TheMuslim500.com](http://www.TheMuslim500.com)] is a popular destination. We welcome your feedback and will take nominations for the 2024 edition through it.

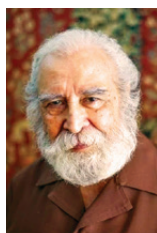
To ensure that our publication maintains strict and professional editorial standards, the editorial team of the Muslim 500 has adopted a new stylesheet for the 2024 edition and for all subsequent editions. Our new housestyle will ensure editorial consistency and accuracy in the spelling of Islamic terms and foreign names. We hope this will set the standards and guidelines to help us define how our content is presented in terms of formatting, typography, grammar, punctuation and other stylistic elements.



...in God let the believers put their trust.

*Repentance, 51*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com



## Man of the Year

PROFESSOR SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS

Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas has been an intellectual giant of the Muslim world for over six decades. He is particularly noted for his pioneering work in the Islamization of knowledge. His philosophy and methodology of education have always been centred on one goal: to Islamicize the mind, body, and soul, and to have that affect all aspects of life, including all spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional matters. He explains the Islamization of Knowledge, or science, as the liberation of man from magic, animism, and mythology on the one hand, and from the godless shackles of secularism on the other. Such liberation results in the freedom of man and his soul to be his true Muslim self, at peace with nature, the environment, and modernity, and capable of rejecting any negative innovation or modern idea that comes his way.

His rich knowledge and rare understanding are fruits of an equally rich and rare upbringing. He was born in 1931 in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, to a scholarly father with Yemeni roots—hailing from the

Ba Alawi family in Hadramaut—and to an aristocratic mother, also with Hadrami roots, from the Sundanese aristocracy in West Java. Thus, he descends from a long line of scholars from the lineage of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) through Imam Hussein, and from the noble aristocracy of his mother.

He received his early education between two countries: first, he learned the traditional Islamic sciences in the town of his birth, Bogor, in Indonesia; and, second, he learned language, literature, and Malay culture in Johor, Malaysia, a city where his aristocratic Turkish grandmother, Ruqayah Hanum, had once been queen. In 1946, he entered the Malay-British Army and trained at Sandhurst. In 1957, he left his military career and began his academic life. He studied at the University of Malaya, then earned a Master's degree in Islamic Theology and Metaphysics from McGill University, Canada, and finally a PhD in Islamic Philosophy from SOAS, London. From 1965, he lectured at the University of Malay and was made Professor of Malay Language and Literature. In

*Professor Al-Attas at his book launch of Islam: The Covenants Fulfilled in Kuala Lumpur in 2023*





1970, he went on to teach at the National University of Malaysia.

During the next few decades, Dr Attas received many awards and honours, including: Commander of the Order of Loyalty to the Crown of Malaysia and membership in the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Academy of Jordan. He is the author of 27 books on subjects including Islamic philosophy, theology, Sufism, Malay literature, history, poetry, metaphysics, civilization, and education. He was responsible for the conceptualization of the Islamic University, which he introduced in the First World Conference on Muslim Education, Makkah (1979). In 1987, he founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought and

Civilization (ISTAC), an organization for graduate studies.

Dr Attas is a philosopher and an academic skilled in many fields, not just those pertaining to philosophy, literature, and history, but also to calligraphy, architecture, and design. His calligraphy designs were exhibited at the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam. Additionally, as a designer and architect, he designed, in Andalusian style, the buildings and grounds of ISTAC.

At the age of 92, Dr Attas is still active and recently published his latest book, *Islam: The Covenants Fulfilled* (2023).

*Students pose in front of the Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas Library at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation at the International Islamic University Malaysia*





# Woman of the Year



DR EDNA ADAN ISMAIL

Dr Edna Adan Ismail is a Somali trailblazer who has spent her lifetime improving the lives of people in her region. A nurse and mid-wife, she has been a tireless healthcare advocate for women, opening a non-profit charity hospital and a private university bearing her name. She has also served in at least two different ministerial posts for Somaliland's government. She has empowered many women to dream and achieve more.

Dr Ismail was born in 1937 in Hargeisa, then in British Somaliland. The territory became the independent state of Somaliland for 5 days in 1960 before uniting into Somalia. Since 1991, it has considered itself once again independent, but the international community recognises it as an autonomous region within Somalia.

Dr Ismail was born to a prominent Somali doctor. Her father would hire teachers to teach the local boys. Since, at the time, education for women was still unheard of, Dr Ismail learned the basics of reading and writing from the boys' teachers. She later went on to attend school in Djibouti. Dr Ismail

had an early personal experience of female genital mutilation (FGM) which was arranged by the female members of her family. Upon finding out, her father was furious and the experience made her determined to prevent this from happening to others. After graduating, Dr Ismail won a scholarship and trained as a nurse and midwife in London.

Once qualified, she returned to Hargeisa, Somaliland's capital, and amidst disruptions caused by the Somali Civil War in 1981, she set out to establish the Edna Adan Maternity Hospital, which eventually opened officially in 2002. The country was still lacking in medical professionals, and Dr Ismail set about personally training nurses and midwives from scratch. From almost zero qualified staff and the meagre facilities of 20 years ago, the hospital now boasts well over 200 staff and 1,500 students. The facilities now include operating theatres and laboratories. Her ambition did not stop there: she went on to establish the Edna Adan University which focuses on medicine and business, where she remains the university's president.

*Dr Ismail presents certificates to graduates at Edna Adan University.*



Outside the world of medicine, she has also had success in government. She was the first female Foreign Minister of Somaliland, from 2003-2006. She also served as Somaliland's Minister of Family Welfare and Social Development. She is no stranger to politics or government, since her husband, Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, served as Prime Minister, and then President, of Somaliland in the 1960s and again from 1993-2002. Dr Ismail is now President of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, and is also President of the Organization for Victims of Torture.

Dr Ismail is the recipient of many awards and has been inducted into the Medical Mission Hall of Fame, University of Toledo, Ohio. She has also been awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Clark

University, Massachusetts. She is an Honourary Fellow of Cardiff University and was granted an honorary fellowship by the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists. She was also awarded an honorary doctorate from London Southbank University. In 2023, she was awarded the prestigious Templeton Prize.

Nurse, midwife, courageous activist, and pioneer in eliminating FGM; minister and one-time First Lady, Dr Ismail has achieved remarkable success in several fields. She credits the beginning of this distinguished life to the damage done to her and her determination to eradicate such injustice for the sake of all women. Finally, beyond Dr Ismail's trail of great successes, her character is a woman of exemplary character and humanity.

*Dr Ismail (second from left) speaks on a panel on women's leadership during the 23rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly.*





# A SELECTED SURVEY OF THE MUSLIM WORLD

by Professor Mustafa Abu Sway

## INTRODUCTION

The Muslim world witnessed major natural disasters, political and social changes in 2023: earthquakes in Türkiye, Syria, Morocco and Indonesia, flooding and fires in Libya and Algeria, as well as other natural calamities. Politically, the two major powers of Saudi Arabia and Iran reestablished diplomatic relations with the agreement between them brokered by China, sidelining other world powers. The influence of other powers is clearly signalled by the growth of BRICS which is a sign of an alternative multipolar world. Four out of six new members of the BRICS economic bloc are Muslim countries: Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. BRICS rivals the G7, and it aims to be less dependent on the USA dollar—something especially attractive to countries that are subject to sanctions.

Muslims living in countries that have embraced the LGBTQ+ movement have been the segment most immediately impacted socially in those cultures. The discourse has shifted from being one confined to human rights and fighting prejudice to one where its values and ideas are enforced on communities. This is done through education, and cultural, legal, and governmental establishments. Moreover, many western countries actively promote the LGBTQ+ agenda in the Arab and Muslim world through tying acceptance of it to aid. The movement is also powerfully promoted through popular culture channels such as streaming services and social media platforms. To not adopt the LGBTQ+ agenda is to be deemed backward, bigoted, and inhumane.

## NATURAL DISASTERS

Many natural disasters affected Muslim countries starting with a 5.6 earthquake in December 2022, near Cianjur in West Java, Indonesia, which killed 635 people and injured 7,700. January 2023 saw a deadly cold snap in Afghanistan killing 166 people and nearly 80,000 livestock. However, by far the most deadly disaster was the earthquakes affecting Türkiye and northern Syria. Two devastating earthquakes of magnitude 7.8 and 7.6 on 6 February 2023

caused 50,000 deaths and more than 100,000 injuries in Türkiye alone. Nine million people have been affected with 5.2 million in need of humanitarian assistance. More than 100,000 buildings and homes were brought to the ground in Türkiye. A huge international humanitarian effort helped provide essentials to those affected as rebuilding the infrastructure starts.

On 8 September Morocco was struck by a 6.8 earthquake in the rural areas in the Atlas Mountains, south of Marrakesh. Close to 3,000 people were killed mainly because homes which were built with sundried mud bricks collapsed and buried the people inside.

In Libya, on 10 September, a Mediterranean storm caused deadly floodings in the coastal cities in the northeastern Green Mountain areas. Two dams burst in the city of Derna, with gushing floodwater destroying building and bridges, and washing people to sea. At least 4,000 people died and more than 10,000 are still missing.

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Major changes continue unabated in Saudi Arabia, from political to economical to societal.

Saudi Arabia is fostering a zero-conflict policy with regional countries and neighbours. As well as restoring diplomatic relations with Iran through Chinese mediation, it has normalized relations with Qatar, welcomed Syria back into the fold of the Arab League, and is working to resolve the conflict in Yemen. Saudi hosted a Houthi delegation in Riyadh and although the war has subsided there have not been any official agreements to end it so far. Neither the Houthi Shia militias nor President Hadi's government can end the conflict although the recent rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran could pave the way for a political solution. The conflict has caused thousands of casualties, and pushed millions to the brink of starvation, with a health system that has all but collapsed. The overwhelming majority of Yemenis need humanitarian assistance.

With the United States pushing for normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel, there is much

talk of how far and quickly Saudi Arabia will go in establishing official relations. Behind the scenes talks have no doubt begun, but the current far-right Israeli government's actions on the ground make it more difficult to make credible progress. Despite all the talks, the Israeli occupation continues unabated 30 years after the Oslo Agreement. Zionist settlers, who control 40% of the West Bank, committed heinous pogroms against the Palestinian towns of Huwarah, Turmus Ayyah, and other villages.

Israel systematically undermines the historical status quo at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif and there is no freedom of movement or freedom of worship for Palestinian Muslims and Christians who reside in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Muslim worshippers who are younger than 50 years of age are often prevented from entering Al-Aqsa.

On 26 February 2023, the Jewish settlers in the West Bank committed the first pogrom in the town of Huwara near Nablus, torching homes, cars, and businesses. The Israeli occupation military did very little to stop it. On 21 June 2023, the second pogrom took place in the town of Turmus Aya, near Ramallah, setting fire to homes, cars, and businesses, desecrating a mosque and the Holy Qur'an.

According to B'Tselem, six Palestinian farming-shepherding communities, home to thousands of Palestinians, are being terrorized to relinquish their land. For decades, Israeli authorities have pursued a policy aimed at driving out these communities by making living conditions intolerable forcing residents to leave, ostensibly of their own volition. This unlawful conduct is motivated by the political ambition, publicly stated by various officials, to establish facts on the ground and take over these areas in a de-facto annexation that would facilitate actual annexation to Israel as part of a final status arrangement.

At the United Nations 78th General Assembly, Arab leaders called for ending the Israeli Occupation and establishing a Palestinian State. On 19 September 2023, HM King Abdullah II defended the Palestinians' right to an "independent and viable state on the June 4th, 1967, lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital", stressing that the region will continue to suffer until the world helps lift the shadow of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict—the central issue in the Middle East." HM King Abdullah II said that this year has been the deadliest for Palestinians for 15 years.

Across the border in Syria, there were signs of rapprochement and an end to the internal conflict. Arab government representatives in Cairo voted on

*Israeli soldiers intrude on worshippers at Al-Haram Al-Sharif*



7 May 2023 to return Syria to the Arab League after a 12-year suspension. Syria's membership in the Arab League was suspended 12 years ago early in the uprising-turned-conflict, which has killed nearly a half million people since March 2011 and displaced half of the country's pre-war population of 23 million.

However, on 8 September 2023 anti-government protests took place in the Druze city of Sweida over the failing economy.

The largest Arab nation, Egypt, sees several mega building projects continuing despite economic hardships. The New Administrative Capital megaproject is largely operated by Egypt's Ministry of Defense, and is taking shape, though completion remains years away. It is connected to Cairo by a 12-lane highway and will accommodate more than six million residents, relieving traffic congestions and other stresses on the crumbling infrastructure in Cairo. It will also consolidate and move government headquarters into one location. It is already home to the tallest iconic building in Africa, a huge presidential palace, Senate and Parliament buildings, residential buildings, schools, hospitals, mosques, churches, a sports complex, and dozens of ministry buildings including the largest defence complex in the world.

Egypt has been grappling with a protracted shortage of foreign currency, record inflation and a rising debt burden despite the economy maintaining relatively steady growth through shocks caused by COVID-19 and the Ukraine war.

Moving south into Sudan, an armed conflict began on 15 April, triggered by a power struggle between the leaders of the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The situation could repeat the Libya scenario where the country is divided between two governments. Both parties have been accused of human rights violations, with a massacre committed in Darfur against fleeing refugees. The conflict has already caused around 7,500 people fatalities and internally displaced more than five million Sudanese. In addition, 1,200 children died in the refugee camps from measles and malnutrition from mid-May to mid-September.

On 19 September 2023, Ukrainian special services were likely behind a series of drone strikes and a ground operation directed against a Wagner-backed militia near Sudan's capital, raising the prospect that the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine has spread far from the frontlines. The operation involved a series of attacks on the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which is believed to be receiving assistance from Wagner, the Russian merce-

nary group, in its fight against the Sudanese army for control of the country.

Iraq's government has set 18 December 2023 as the date for holding provincial elections in line with the ministerial agenda adopted by the government and approved by the Parliament last October. However, the largest party, the Sadrist Movement, is boycotting the elections, and indeed stated that it is withdrawing from politics. In a complex picture, this latter position might not be final as the history of this movement indicates.

The Iraqi Kurdistan semi-autonomous region continues to have issues with the federal government of Iraq regarding power sharing, oil revenue, and territorial control. In 2020, Iraq cut federal budget contributions to the KRG after Erbil failed to turn over the 250,000 barrels per day stipulated in the 2019 budget.

The situation escalated in March 2023, when Türkiye stopped its oil imports from the Kurdistan Region after a ruling by the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce that said Türkiye owed Iraq \$1.5 billion for receiving unauthorized exports. The Federal government is slated to be more in control of oil production in the Kurdistan region.

It is very important to recall the many revolts and wars between the Kurds and the Iraqi government over most of the last 100 years, with regional and international players playing the Kurdish issue to weaken the government in Baghdad. It is bound to reemerge in the future, especially after Iraqi Kurdistan had a referendum which supports independence.

Relations between Morocco and Algeria are still poor with Morocco refusing to accept humanitarian assistance from Algeria in the aftermath of the most recent earthquake. Borders between the two countries have remained closed since 1994, despite repeated calls by Morocco in recent years for their reopening. Algeria helped found the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara and does not recognize Morocco's sovereignty over the Western Sahara, causing uneasy relationship between the two Arab neighbours.

In the complicated world of Libya, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, who heads one of Libya's rival governments, said he suspended Foreign Minister Najla Mangoush and referred her for an investigation over her meeting with the Israeli Foreign Minister, which was the first ever between top diplomats of Libya and Israel. Mangoush fled to Türkiye following the Israeli announcement of the meeting.

Libya has been divided between rival administrations since 2014, with an internationally recognized



government in Tripoli and a rival authority in the east. On 15 August 2023, clashes between armed groups affiliated with Libya's Tripoli-based Government of National Unity erupted in the Libyan capital.

The recent hurricane in the Green Mountain burst two dams in the port city of Derna, creating a wall of water that swept people and whole neighbourhoods into the Mediterranean Sea. More than 11,000 are estimated to have died, and 10,000 are missing. This mega catastrophe became a rallying cry for unity and an end to the ongoing conflict. The flooding disaster is providing a rare opportunity for reunifying Libya.

Tunisia, the birth of the Arab Spring, has seen a suspension of parliament and the judiciary in recent years by the democratically elected president, President Saïed. On 23 January 2023, 37 judges filed individual complaints at the Court of First Instance, seeking compliance with the administrative court order to reinstate the 49 magistrates (judges and prosecutors) affected by dissolving the High Judicial Council. He replaced it, through decree no. 2022-11, with a temporary HJC in which all 21 members are appointed including nine directly by the President. He runs the country with presidential decrees.

The recently elected members of the new parliament met to hold their first session on Monday, almost 20 months after the body was suspended in July 2021. The new lawmakers were elected at the beginning of the year in a poll boycotted by opposition parties and most of the electorate. Turnout was only 11%. The opposition boycotted the elections. The EU has an agreement with Tunisia with funding to combat illegal immigration to Europe.

In Türkiye, despite many commentators predicting a change in run-off elections on 28 May 2023, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan won the elections. The incumbent President has been Prime Minister and President of Türkiye since 2003. He has also re-synched the relations with the UAE and Saudi Arabia which soured over various regional issues including the Qatari blockade, support for the Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestine/Israel issue. Egypt and Türkiye resumed diplomatic relations in early July 2023. This is part of a wider reproachment of Türkiye with the Arab World. Both countries suffer from struggling economies, currency devaluation, and a very high rate of inflation.

Iran and Saudi Arabia resumed full diplomatic relations with China mediating talks. Through Qatar's mediation, Iran released American-Iranian prisoners

in exchange for 6 billion dollars that had been frozen by the USA.

The first anniversary of Mahsa Amini dying in Iranian moral police custody was marked by protests. She was detained for not wearing her hijab properly. The massive protests in Iran were met by an iron-fisted policy, leading to many protesters being killed or imprisoned. The moral police was then dissolved.

## SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Most sub-Saharan countries included in this survey suffer from violence and atrocities at the hands of state actors, non-state actors, foreign troops and contractors as the Russian Wagner Group. Many insurgents and terrorist organizations proliferate across borders.

### Nigeria

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with over 230 million people, with Muslims forming about 54% of the population and Christians around 46%. Armed groups have attacked police stations and government buildings in states in Nigeria's southeast, which authorities often blame on the proscribed separatist Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) group. There is an Islamist insurgency in the northeast and violent sectarian and herder-farmer clashes in the central region.

The most notorious group is Boko Haram—which translates literally to “Western education is forbidden”—which has, since 2009, killed tens of thousands of people. The rise of Boko Haram is inextricable from post-colonial identity formation in Nigeria, a diverse state, where the Westernized method of schooling was already adopted by the Christian south during colonial times and was then imposed on the Muslim north post-independence. It was then seen as responsible for the lack of job opportunities. At the beginning, Boko Haram was a nuisance, not more. They were coopted by Muslim politicians for elections. The police brutality against Boko Haram is believed to be a staged operation triggering one of the worst cases of terrorism.

The terrorist group's international profile was raised when it began kidnapping hundreds of schoolgirls—especially in April 2014, when it kidnapped 267 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok in Borno State, sparking the global “bring back our girls” campaign. Today, their atrocities have reached the neighbouring countries of Cameroon and Chad.



*The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam*

## Chad

The state of Chad's political transition is not reassuring. Despite some signs of progress during the National Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue (NISD) last October, security forces engaged in violent crackdowns of protests shortly afterward killing many civilians. Meanwhile, the transitional President Mahamat Idriss Déby moved to consolidate power ahead of elections planned for October 2024, leaving opposition and civic groups worried that Déby may not turn power over to a civilian government. His father ruled Chad for more than 30 years, from 1991 to 2021.

It is in this context that Déby moved quickly to open an embassy in Tel Aviv, which he personally inaugurated, probably believing that this move will align western powers on his side. During his visit, he was taken to Al-Aqsa Mosque, accompanied by the Israeli security forces. The timing was in the late afternoon when few worshippers were present.

The transitional military council and more than 40 rebel groups signed a peace accord in Doha, Qatar, to end a decades long conflict and initiate a broader national dialogue. However, nine armed factions, including the Front for Change and Concord in Chad, the Libya-based group, opposed the deal. The latter are reported to be fighting along the Sudanese Rapid Support Forces, who committed massa-

ces and atrocities in Darfur when they were fighting on behalf of the Sudanese government.

Chad is surrounded by countries embroiled in civil wars in Libya and Sudan, with Sudanese refugees crossing the border to Chad, enduring new massacres as they escape the war.

## Ethiopia

The government in Sheger city, in the Oromia region, demolished 19 mosques in 2023. The police killed two protesting the mosques' demolishing, and injured scores tens of protesters. This is regrettably a setback from the historical role that Ethiopia played in protecting Muslims. The new plans for Sheger city, which will encase Addis Ababa, along with other ethnic conflicts, led to many internally displaced Ethiopians.

Ethiopia completed filling the reservoir of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in 2023. This dam, which was built on the Blue Nile, primarily to generate electricity, caused rising tensions with the two downstream countries, Egypt and Sudan. Egypt threatened a military solution to the dam crisis, with Egyptian media beating the drums of war, with no indicators for imminent action.

The 1959 agreement gives Egypt the right to veto any project by upstream countries. The USA tried to mediate with Ethiopia to no avail.





*Maliens express support for Russia after the French and UN peacekeeping troops leave*

## **Mali**

The transitional government that came to power in a 2021 coup—the second military overthrow in less than a year—undermined efforts to investigate the mounting allegations of atrocities by state actors. Impunity for past and ongoing abuses by all armed groups persisted.

Human rights deteriorated dramatically in Mali in 2022 as attacks against civilians by Islamist armed groups and killings of suspects by pro-government forces during counterterrorism operations surged. The government increasingly cracked down on media and opposition voices, narrowing civic space. The mounting abuses occurred amid a background of an ongoing political crisis and significant tension with Mali's diplomatic partners, anchored in Mali's decision to employ the Wagner Group, a private military security contractor with apparent links to the Russian government, with mounting allegations of summary executions and other abuses by them. Wagner is active in many sub-Saharan countries.

France ended a decade-long military operation in Mali. Mali's relationship with the United Nations and neighbouring West African countries deteriorated throughout the year, increasing Mali's political isolation.

Little progress was made in restoring state authority and services. The humanitarian situation worsened

because of global food shortages and the effects of climate change. The number of internally displaced people increased from 2021, bringing the total close to half a million people.

## **Mauritania**

Mauritania, with a population of about 5 million, has experienced decades of military rule since 1978, but recent presidential and parliamentary elections have been relatively credible. In June 2019, Mauritians elected Mohamed Ould Ghazouani as President. He won 52% of the vote in the first round. The election represented Mauritania's first-ever peaceful transfer of executive power, signalling a departure from a history of military coups.

The government appears to address pressing issues such as slavery but doesn't appreciate media coverage.

In December 2022, the case of former president Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who was accused of corruption in 2021, was formally transferred to an anticorruption court.

Mauritania suffered from flooding that was exacerbated by urban expansion without proper drainage. This had negative impact on the improving economy, yet to return to pre-covid performances. It is vital for all countries, even those without a history of heavy rain, to have a serious assessment of their infrastructure. The climate change could make unexpected flash floods.

## **Somalia**

After the overthrowing of the military regime of President Siad Barre in 1991, rival warlords tore the country apart into clan-based fiefdoms. An internationally backed unity government formed in 2000 struggled to establish control, with separatist movements in the two relatively peaceful northern regions of Somaliland and Puntland. However, unlike Somaliland, Puntland is not trying to obtain international recognition as a separate nation but is part of the federal Somali state.

The seizure of the capital Mogadishu and much of the country's south by a coalition of Islamist Shariah courts in 2006 prompted an intervention by Ethiopian, and later the African Union, forces.

Since 2012, when a new internationally backed government was installed, Somalia has been inching towards stability, but the new authorities still face a challenge from Al-Qaeda-aligned Al-Shabab insurgents. The main problem in Somalia is the absence of a strong government that could police both land and ocean. Recently, the Somali pirates' threat subsided.

In 2022, the Somali government forces, aided by US air strikes and African Union troops, carried out major offensives against Al-Shabab, retaking control of significant areas that had previously been under the group's control.

Three decades of conflict nearly destroyed Somalia's health and education systems, which are characterized by poor quality, insufficient access, and inadequate resources. As a result, 3 million children are not enrolled in school.

Recently, Somalia has been hit with its worst drought in a century. According to UNICEF, over 1.4 million children in Somalia, nearly half of the country's under-five population, are likely to suffer from acute malnutrition due to the ongoing drought. Acute malnutrition leads to stunted growth, weakened immune systems, and irreversible damage to cognitive development.

## **ASIA**

### **Afghanistan:**

The Taliban government continued its policies regarding women in education and work. In December 2022, it barred female students from attending university, having already banned girls from middle school and high school. It then barred women from working with national and international non-governmental groups, after already excluding them from most jobs. The Taliban closed all women beauty sa-

lons, affecting 60,000 workers and entrepreneurs.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. Its trade deficit in the first half of 2023 is 32% wider than the same period in 2022. Half of Afghani families struggle to sustain their livelihood.

## **Azerbaijan**

Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian enclave that is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, has been the cause of two wars between the neighbours in the past three decades, most recently in 2020.

On 19 September 2023, Azerbaijan's defence ministry said it had begun a [military] "anti-terrorist" campaign in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, as Armenian media and local authorities reported heavy bombardment of the regional capital of Stepanakert, which is known as Khankendi by Azerbaijan. Within two days, the Armenians accepted the conditions imposed by Azerbaijan.

## **Bangladesh**

Ahead of the January 2024 elections, hundreds of opposition leaders from the Bangladesh National party have been detained to disqualify them from participating in the national elections. The ruling Awami League government is aware of the international observers' scrutiny of the environment leading to the elections.

The Rohingya refugees who fled persecution in Myanmar, mostly in 2017, and ended up as refugees in Bangladesh, are subject to criminal activities, abduction, child recruitment and killing. The Bangladesh Ministry of Defence reported that at least 11 armed groups are operating in the camps. Several criminal gangs involved in drug smuggling and human trafficking have been vying for greater control in the camps, with the refugees caught in the middle. In 2022 40 refugees were killed and 48 have already been killed in 2023. The authorities are failing to adequately protect Rohingya refugees from surging violence.

## **Indonesia**

General elections will be held in the world's third-largest democracy, Indonesia, in February 2024. The three candidates running for president are Prabowo Subianto, who has already run twice unsuccessfully for the post (losing to incumbent Joko Widodo), Ganjar Pranowo, a popular candidate outside the political and military elite and Anies Baswedan, former governor of Jakarta.

In Rempang, Indonesia demonstrations have rocked Indonesia's Riau Islands province as residents

of Rempang Island protest government plans to evict thousands of people to make way for a multibillion-dollar Chinese-owned glass factory and “Eco-City”.

The dispute over the evictions has been heating up for months, after the government announced that Rempang’s 7,500 residents would have to move inland, some 60km (37 miles) away from their coastal homes. Many make a living from the sea, selling locally caught seafood.

China is investing heavily in Indonesian infrastructure.

### **Malaysia**

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim’s ruling coalition and the conservative opposition took control of three states each in regional election in August 2023. The regional election was widely seen as a referendum of Anwar’s leadership and the strength of the opposition, which includes the religious conservative Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), after a divisive general election in November.

Anwar’s multi-ethnic Pakatan Harapan (PH) alliance triumphed in the three states it held prior to the vote: Selangor and Penang, which are the country’s richest, as well as Negeri Sembilan.

The results also showed the PAS-backed Perikatan Nasional (PN) alliance keeping its hold on the heartland states of Kedah, Kelantan, and northern Terengganu.

Anwar Ibrahim held talks with Elon Musk about Tesla and Starlink. Musk will establish headquarters for Tesla in the state of Selangor and launch the satellite internet service Starlink later this year.

### **Pakistan**

A federal court in Pakistan suspended former Prime Minister Imran Khan’s corruption conviction and three-year jail sentence, ordering his release on bail. But another court swiftly ordered him to be detained in a separate case.

The ruling by the high court in Islamabad in the graft case came in response to Khan’s appeal against his conviction, arguing it was unlawful and breached his “fundamental right to due process and fair trial”. The eventual suspension order will remain effective until the appeal is heard seeking the conviction be overturned.

The embattled 70-year-old politician was arrested and jailed after being found guilty of selling state gifts in office and allegedly concealing their proceeds. Khan has denied any wrongdoing. The conviction

prompted the Pakistan Election Commission to immediately ban Khan from running for office for five years under relevant laws.

The new ruling also granted bail for Khan, but the former prime minister faces myriad other allegations, ranging from terrorism and sedition to corruption and murder.

Khan alleges that the country’s powerful military is behind all the legal challenges to prevent him and his political party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, from participating in the next general elections. Pakistan’s parliament was dissolved on 9 August, leaving a caretaker government to take over in the run-up to general elections, which have been announced for January 2024.

The Khunjerab border is the highest-paved international border crossing in the world at almost 5,000 metres above sea level, connecting Pakistan and China. It provides the shortest route for Chinese cargo headed for the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia. It was closed in 2019 to control the spread of the coronavirus. This is part of the new Silk Road plan, which already connects China with Europe by land cutting the time and cost of exports. Pakistan is suffering from the highest rate of inflation in 50 years

## **COUNTRIES WITH MUSLIM MINORITIES, ISLAMOPHOBIA AND LGBTQ+.**

### **China**

There has been an increase in the Sinicization of Chinese Islam, including not just cultural practices of the Muslims but also their historical architecture. In late May, thousands of Hui Muslims clashed with local police in the town of Nagu in China’s southwestern Yunnan Province. They were protesting the government’s plan to demolish the dome and minarets of the Najiaying mosque, a structure originally built in the 14th century. The mosques of Najiaying and nearby Shadian have stood as relics of the Chinese state’s past tolerance of Islam and Muslims in Yunnan. They are the last two mosques in the province to still boast traditionally Arab features, namely domes and minarets. Recent years have seen the government-backed transformation of several mosques.

The latest persecution of the predominantly Muslim Uyghurs who live in Xinjiang coincides with the sensitive anniversary of the 2009 ethnic violence in Urumqi, which triggered the Chinese government’s efforts to repress Uyghur culture and religion with mass surveillance and internment campaigns. Chi-



nese authorities launched a 100-day “strike hard” campaign against Uyghurs in Xinjiang, cracking down on gatherings of more than 30 people.

The UN’s Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has exposed further evidence of China’s enforced disappearance practices in Xinjiang, particularly focusing on the plight of Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in the region. Recent findings from the working group highlight the arbitrary nature of detentions, unfair trials and secrecy surrounding those who have disappeared, pointing toward China’s potential breach of international human rights standards and involvement in crimes against humanity. China denies carrying out human rights abuses in the region and has labelled camps in Xinjiang “vocational education and training centers”.

### Denmark and Sweden

Far-right Scandinavian extremist provocateurs, including an Iraqi immigrant, have publicly desecrated and burnt the Holy Qur’an in Sweden several times. This has caused outrage across the Muslim world.

At the end of August, Denmark’s government said that it would move to criminalize the public mistreatment of religious objects. Those found guilty of mistreating an object with major religious significance could be fined or sentenced to up to two years in prison, according to a draft of a bill published by the Danish Justice Ministry—but should be approved by the parliament.

In Sweden, the Government has appointed a parliamentary committee (dir. 2021:87) that will decide whether specific criminal liability should be introduced for Holocaust denial. No equivalent parliamentary committee is looking into Islamophobic activities.

The Swedish authorities have closed 17 private Islamic schools since 2019, claiming they are unfit to conduct school activities, and that the children might be radicalized. Private Muslim schools teach Sweden’s national curriculum, but also provide students with Islamic teachings, the space to practice Islamic rituals and offer halal food.

### France

The French obsession with Muslim women’s dress has a new addition. The French education minister Gabriel Attal declared that the *abayah* worn by some Muslim women “can no longer be worn in schools”. The *abayah* is anything but a monolith dress and could be classified as merely a fashion statement. France has already outlawed Muslim women head-

scarves at schools, and the full body burkini swimwear at beaches.

### India

Religious freedom conditions in India are taking a drastic turn downward, with national and various state governments tolerating widespread harassment and violence against religious minorities. The BJP-led government enacted the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), which provides a fast track to Indian citizenship only for non-Muslim migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistanis already residing in India. This potentially exposes millions of Muslims to detention, deportation, and statelessness when the government completes its planned nationwide National Register of Citizens (2023 Annual Report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom).

In addition, “vegetarian nationalism” targets Muslims for their consumption of meat, vowing to protect cows. Vigilantes have targeted the meat industry.

Popular singers who have millions of followers on social media use lyrics that call for the expulsion of Muslims to Pakistan, and killing Muslims, without any legal action against this Islamophobic hate crimes. The call for expulsion manifested itself in the Citizenship Amendment Bill which divides migrants into Muslims and non-Muslims, and blatantly seeks to enshrine religious discrimination into law.

Scores of petitions have been filed by right-wing Hindu groups against mosques across the country, with unsubstantiated claims to mosques being originally Hindu Temples. Even the Taj Mahal is being coloured by the homogenizing right-wing Hindu nationalist narrative.

### LGBTQ+

In 1973, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) removed the diagnosis of “homosexuality” from the second edition of its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM). Thus began a new orthodoxy: it was now a matter of professional, informed opinion that homosexuality was not an aberration, but an acceptable expression of human sexuality. It was gay activism—which emerged in the wake of the Stonewall riots in 1969—that resulted in changing the seventh printing of the DSM-II. Gay rights activists began protesting against the APA in 1970 during its convention in San Francisco. The activists would interrupt speakers, shouting down and ridiculing psychiatrists who viewed homosexuality as a mental dis-



*A Dutch footballer wearing the banned One Love armband*

order. During the 1971 conference, gay rights activist Frank Kameny of the Gay Liberation Front grabbed the microphone and yelled: “Psychiatry is the enemy incarnate. Psychiatry has waged a relentless war of extermination against us. You may take this as a declaration of war against you.”

But gay rights are no longer a matter of mere recognition. Rather, this is a new orthodoxy. It has now reached the point that quoting scripture against homosexuality and voting for legislature that limits enforced recognition of homosexuality are being labelled as hate speech and being compared to Nazism. Videos of Muslim students (in the UK and Canada) being reprimanded by teachers and schoolmasters for having non-conformist views on the LGBT issue have gone viral. While Western Muslims, particularly those in North America, have typically been left-aligned politically, the LGBT issue has forged a new, right-aligned political engagement, with Muslims in the lead and conservative Christians following. This is in direct contrast to fringe elements within the Western Muslim community that have openly gay imams and mosques that are LGBT friendly. While such elements are still largely in the minority, the combination of political support and forced indoctrination of students promises a bleak future for the orthodox Islamic view on homosexuality.

Secularism is often defined as the separation of religion from civil affairs and the state. However, while the initial goal of secularism was to prevent religion from interfering in state and civil affairs, religious Muslims, Christians and Jews now face something else entirely: the state interfering in religious affairs. In reality, separation of religion and the state is a myth, and LGBTQ+ legislation is proof of this (this has been preceded by bans on religious slaughter by Muslims and Jews in Europe, as well as by a discussion surrounding banning male circumcision). While there is no ideal Islamic state in existence, the constitutions of many Muslim-majority countries include Islam as part of their countries’ identities. The fear is that the “progress” of Western-branded psychiatry in Muslim-majority countries, as well as growing political pressures, may produce a generation that sees no conflict in a gay Muslim identity.

In 2015, the US Ambassador to Jordan, Alice Wells, sparked local outrage when she attended a gathering of 40 people in central Amman to mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. A Pew Research poll in 2007 reported that 97% of Jordanians do not accept homosexuality, one of the world’s highest levels of rejection. Thus, political pressure from the likes of USAID, UKAID, the UN, and others, is unlikely to make major inroads into Arab countries at present. While Jordan’s intelligentsia, like that of most Arab countries, looks westwards for guidance, outright political coercion would be political suicide for Western interests given the current socio-religious outlook. It’s not just Jordanian Muslims who are conservative, but its Christian community as well. Rather, a softer approach, one of inundating Muslim lands with Western edutainment-cum-values, is the political *modus operandi du jour*.

The inability to coerce Muslim-majority countries into accepting LGBT legislation was underlined during the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, where homosexuality, as well as campaigning for LGBT rights, is criminalized. Players were banned from wearing OneLove arm bands, with receiving a yellow card being the minimum punishment for doing so. Furthermore, rainbow flags and other rainbow-related apparel were confiscated. Mexico was subjected to disciplinary measures by FIFA after the final group stage match against Saudi Arabia because of so-called homophobic chants during the course of the game.

However, the Western-sponsored LGBT agenda in Africa has been more aggressive. In Ghana, US Vice-President Kamala Harris appeared to criticize a

bill before the country's parliament which criminalizes LGBT advocacy and proposes jail terms for those who identify as such. In Tanzania, a former minister spoke against US support for LGBTQ+ rights ahead of the visit, and in Zambia, some opposition politicians threatened to hold protests. However, it is Uganda that is at the greatest risk after having approved the world's most stringent anti-LGBT law. Calling it "shameful", the law drew the condemnation of the United States and the European Union, who say Uganda faces sanctions if it is not repealed. The World Bank and other international organizations are also reevaluating their relationship with Uganda. US President Joe Biden declared that American officials will review Uganda's place in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)—a potential loss of \$950 million annually.

The acceptance of homosexuality is no longer a matter of gay rights, but the rights of religious people and sovereign states to self-determination.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The above survey has briefly touched on some issues facing the two billion strong Muslim ummah. Climate change repercussions affect all on this planet, but they disproportionately impact those who are less fortunate and lack access to resources and essential facilities—a group in which many Muslims

find themselves. Muslims also find themselves making up the majority of another group crying out for help; the world's current 35 million refugees. There are also severe challenges for Muslims in China and India as well as for the Rohingya. Muslims globally, particularly those living outside of Muslim majority countries, face an onslaught regarding their religious views on gender, and same-sex relations. Regrettably, the global response to all these issues has thus far been insufficient, and if not promptly addressed, these challenges are poised to intensify.

Consequently, many voices are calling for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to assume a more central role in resolving political disputes and ensuring more equitable resource distribution within the ummah. This is of course challenging, but it is often a question of political will rather than resources and capability. Many affluent Muslim nations are increasingly focusing on diversifying their economies, marking a positive step in their long-term planning. Additionally, more of these nations are asserting themselves in the global economy and international politics. This shows they have the capability and strength to enact change.

Despite the multitude of challenges faced globally, it is our hope, in-sha-Allah, that by forging a new Ummatic paradigm, Muslims can empower themselves not only for their own well-being but also for the betterment of humanity at large.



Professor Abu Sway frequently lectures globally as well as in the heart of Jerusalem, Palestine, at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. He is a member of Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, and the Islamic Waqf Council in Jerusalem. He is author of three books on Imam Al-Ghazali: *Islamic Epistemology: The Case of Al-Ghazali*, *Fatawa Al-Ghazali* (Arabic) and *A Treasury of Al-Ghazali*.

As this edition goes into print, we have just witnessed Hamas' operation Al-Aqsa Typhoon, which launched unprecedented air, sea, and land attacks on the military bases and settlements of the occupying power. The region and the world now grapple with the complex and evolving consequences of this game-changing move, which broke the 21-year military blockade on the Gaza Strip.



# QuranicThought.com

وَقَفَّيْنَا الْأَمْرَ إِلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاضِلِينَ  
THE PRINCE GHAZI TRUST  
FOR QUR'ANIC THOUGHT  
Est. 2012 CE



**QuranicThought.com** is a project dedicated to making all the important texts of the Islamic Sciences over the course of history up to the present day available free to everyone in the world, at one trusted address. This massive endeavour, consisting of millions of books and tens of thousands of hours of audio recordings, will be permanently ongoing *in sha Allah*. All texts will be available in Arabic, and English translations will be provided where these are available, God willing.

The site is committed to providing all the texts available in a non-political, non-partisan way, promoting all four established Sunni *madhabib* and respecting the other *madhabib* of Islam: Zeidi, Jafari, Tahiri and Ibadhi, as well as the thought of the early imams like Sufyan al-Thawri, Laith Ibn Sa'd and Al-Awza'i.

The materials have been categorized by Qur'an (for listening); *tafsir*; *hadith*, *usul*, *seerah*, *aqidah*, *fiqh*; *ihsan*, and *falsafa*. This is followed by a list of 25 books for the essential texts of all disciplines which all Muslims should know and a section on the 500 most influential books on Sunni Thought (according to the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institution's seminal survey).

Then, there are sections for three pivotal Shafi'i scholars (in association with the Professorial chairs on Razi and Ghazali linked to this website): Ghazali, Razi and Suyuti. Studying the entire thought of one major comprehensive thinker can be far more conducive to real comprehension and to absorbing an Islamic world-view than cherry-picking from many scholars, especially with polymaths like Ghazali, Razi and Suyuti.

Moreover, Ghazali represents a high point in Islamic *usul* (particularly in his *Mustasfa*), a high point in *ihsan* and *'aqida* (in his magnum opus, *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din*) and a high point in both logic and philosophy in his books on those subjects. Razi represents the high point of Tafsir and Kalam in his *Mafatih al-Ghayb*. Suyuti represents a high point of Tafsir *ma'thur* (transmitted tafsir) in his *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, *Al-Durr al-Manthur* and his *Itqan fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*, a comprehensive survey of *hadith* in his collections of *hadith*, and authoritative exposition of Shafi'i *fiqh*.

This website and app are already the most extensive Islamic book and audio resource on the internet and continue to grow by the Grace of God.



# THE HOUSE OF ISLAM

# I. THE HOUSE OF ISLAM

This section reprinted by permission of Vincenzo Oliveti © 2001

(with the exception of President Obama's speech)

**T**he 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 Makkah and Madinah, 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 thus 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): Islam (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 Madinah] 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) 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 re-

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



turn to one's true inner heart, the mysterious square, black-shrouded Ka'ba in Makkah 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>

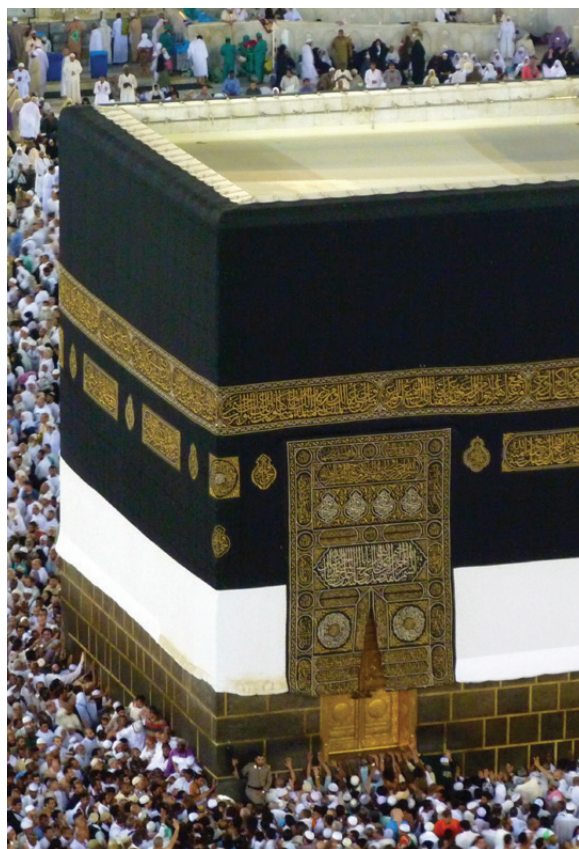
## THE CANON OF ISLAM

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 homogeneous 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 prin-

ciples 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 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.

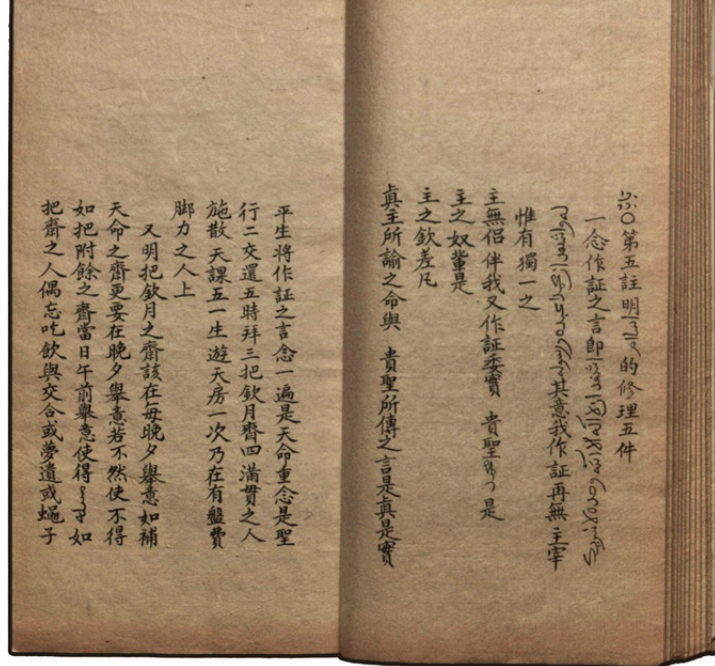
To be more specific, the traditional Sunni Islamic Canon starts with the Qur'an itself; then the great traditional Commentaries upon it (e. g. Tabari; Razi; Zamakhshari/Baydawi; Qurtubi; Jalalayn;



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'.



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 minimise 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 civilisation 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 learn-

ing 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 recognised. But Islamic Spain was much more than a mere larder where Hellenistic knowledge was kept for later consumption by the emerging modern Western world.

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—

TOP LEFT: Manuscript pages of *A Sketch of the Islamic Law* by Ma Boliang (1640–1711 CE), an influential Islamic scholar from Jining, China. Islamic scholars who authenticated the work include Li Yongshou, Wen Yingshi, Yang Jiu'en, Ma Minggao, and Ma Zhilin.

TOP RIGHT: A manuscript page from *Sahih al-Bukhārī* from the National Library of Bulgaria dated 407 AH (1017 CE).

BELOW: Alhambra Palace in Spain





Not only did Muslim Spain gather and preserve the intellectual content of ancient Greek and Roman civilisation, it also interpreted and expanded upon that civilisation, 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 civilisation’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.

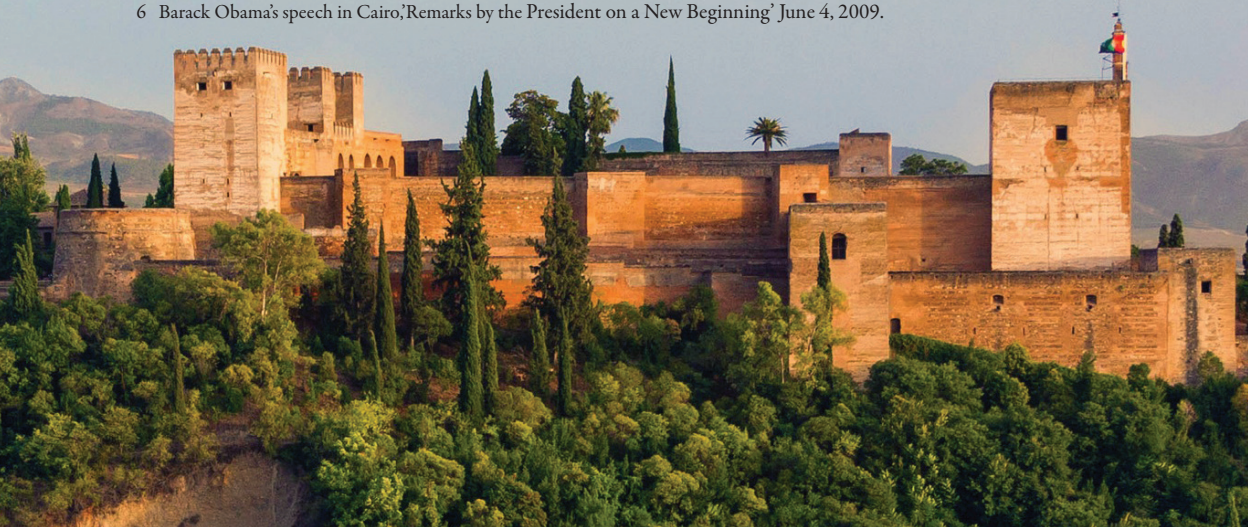
I also know that Islam has always been a part of America’s story. The first nation to recognise my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty



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.



## 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.

---

<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)

## Shia 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 leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

### 3) ZAIDI SCHOOL

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

(90% 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, Shia, and Ibadi branches of practice (and their subgroups) within the fold of Islam, but not groups such as the Druze or the Ahmadiyya, among others.

## ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

(9% of the world's Muslims)  
(8% Salafi; 1 % Ikhwan)

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

## ISLAMIC MODERNISM

(1% of the world's Muslims)

Emerging from 19th 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'h* 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 Madinah.

**Maliki**  
(15%)

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

**Hanbali**  
(2%)

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



## SHIA

(9.5% of the world's traditional Muslims)

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

## BRANCHES OF SHIA ISLAM

### Zaidis (Fivers)

(Less than 1%)

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

### Twelvers

(8%)

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

### Isma'ilis (Seveners)

(Less than 0.5%)

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

## SCHOOLS OF ISLAMIC LAW FOR TWELVER SHIA

### 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 *akhbar* 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 *mutabarrikîn* (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.

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **Shadhiliyyah**

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

#### **Kubrawiyya**

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

#### **Suhrawardiyya**

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

#### **Chishtiyya**

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

#### **Mawlawiyya**

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

#### **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.

#### **Yashrutiyya**

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

#### **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.

#### **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.

### SHIA ORDERS

#### **Irfan**

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

### SHIA

#### **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 Shia 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.

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

مَثَلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ  
يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ  
نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ  
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His Light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star kindled from a Blessed Tree, an olive neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow forth [of itself], though no fire touched it. Light upon light. God guides to His Light whom He will. And God strikes similitudes for men; and God is Knower of all things.

*Light 35*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com



# THE TOP 50

# The Top 50

1. HE Sheikh Al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz  
Scholar and Director of Dar Al Mustafa, Tarim,  
Yemen (11)
2. HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud  
King of Saudi Arabia, Custodian of the Two Holy  
Mosques (1)
3. HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei  
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
(2)
4. HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamid Al-Thani  
Emir of Qatar (3)
5. HM King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein  
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Cus-  
todian of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem (5)
6. HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed  
Al-Nahyan  
UAE (8)
7. HE President Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
Türkiye (4)
8. HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani  
Scholar and Deobandi Leader (6)
9. HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein  
Al-Sistani  
Marja of the Hawza, Najaf, Iraq (9)
10. HM King Mohammed VI  
King of Morocco (7)
11. Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda  
Scholar and Preacher (12)
12. HRH Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman  
bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud  
Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia (10)
13. HE President Joko Widodo  
Indonesia (13)
14. HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb  
Grand Sheikh of the Al-Azhar University, Grand  
Imam of Al-Azhar Mosque (14)
15. HE Ismail Haniyeh  
Head of Hamas Political Bureau (Hon Men)
16. Maulana Mahmood Madani  
Leader and President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind,  
India (15)
17. HE Anwar Ibrahim (HM)  
Prime Minister of Malaysia (HM)
18. HRE Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan  
Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III  
Sultan of Sokoto (18)
19. HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah  
Scholar and President of the Forum for Promot-  
ing Peace in Muslim Societies (16)
20. Yahya Cholil Staquf  
Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama (19)
21. HE President Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi  
Egypt (40)
22. HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa  
Former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of  
Egypt (20)
23. Sheikh Habib 'Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri  
Preacher and Director General of Tabah (22)
24. Dr Ibrahim Kalin  
Director of the Turkish National Intelligence Or-  
ganization (450 lists)
25. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson  
Teacher and Co-Founder of Zaytuna College (23)
26. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse  
Leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi Order (24)

27. Sheikh Mustafa Hosny  
Preacher (26)
28. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah  
Secretary-General of Hezbollah (21)
29. HE Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal  
Al-Sheikh  
Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (27)
30. Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari  
Scholar (28)
31. HE President Ilham Aliyev  
President of Azerbaijan (450 lists)
32. HH Shah Karim Al-Hussayni  
The Aga Khan IV, 49th Imam of Ismaili Muslims  
(29)
33. Al-Habib Luthfi bin Yahya  
Preacher (30)
34. Maulana Tariq Jameel  
Scholar and Preacher (32)
35. Sheikh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi  
Scholar (34)
36. Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr  
Philosopher and University Professor (35)
37. HE President Samia Suluhu Hassan  
Tanzania (38)
38. Sheikh Uthman Taha  
Calligrapher (36)
39. Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi  
Leader of the Houthi (31)
40. Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi  
Tunisian Politician (37)
41. Mohammed Salah  
Footballer (39)
42. Sheikh Muqtada Sadr  
Scholar and Political (41)
43. Maulana Nazur ur-Rahman  
Amir of Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan (42)
44. Dr Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal Hakim  
Murad)  
Scholar (44)
45. HE Sheikh Ibrahim Saleh  
Scholar (45)
46. HE Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada  
Leader of the Taliban (49)
47. Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri  
Founder of Dawat-e-Islami Movement, (50)
48. Dr Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (HM)  
Scholar
49. Dr Amr Khaled  
Preacher and Televangelist (47)
50. Professor Mustafa Abu Sway (450 lists)  
Scholar

# THE TOP 50 AND HONOURABLE MENTIONS LISTED BY CATEGORY

Although the influence of the Top 50 straddles many categories and cannot be limited to just one or another category, it can be insightful to place them into more general categories. To the Top 50 we have added the Honourable Mentions and have chosen three general categories into which to place them: 1. Rulers and Politicians, 2. Scholars and Preachers and 3. Social Issues, Media, Science, Arts, Culture and Sports.

---

## *Rulers and Politicians*

---

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud   | 14. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah                               |
| 2. HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei                                   | 15. HE President Ilham Aliyev                            |
| 3. HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamid Al-Thani                                       | 16. HH Shah Karim Al-Hussayni                            |
| 4. HM King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein  | 17. HE President Samia Suluhu Hassan                     |
| 5. HH President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan                              | 18. Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi                         |
| 6. HE President Recep Tayyip Erdogan   | 19. HE Rached Ghannouchi                                 |
| 7. HM King Mohammed VI   | 20. HE Sheikh Muqtada Sadr                               |
| 8. HRH Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud                   | 21. HE Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada                     |
| 9. HE President Joko Widodo  | 22. HE Mohammed Shayya al-Sudani, Prime Minister of Iraq |
| 10. HE Ismail Haniyeh  | 23. HE President Mahmoud Abbas                           |
| 11. HE Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia                                 | 24. HE Sheikh Hasina Wazed, Prime Minister of Bangladesh |
| 12. HE President Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi,                                     | 25. HE Former Prime Minister Imran Khan                  |
| 13. Dr Ibrahim Kalin, Director of the Turkish National Intelligence Organization | 26. HE Sadiq Khan  |
- 

## *Scholars and Preachers*

---

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Sheikh Al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz                                     | 14. Sheikh Mustafa Hosny                                |
| 2. HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani                             | 15. HE Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh     |
| 3. HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani                   | 16. Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari                    |
| 4. Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda  | 17. Habib Luthfi bin Yahya                              |
| 5. HE Professor Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb                    | 18. Maulana Tariq Jameel                                |
| 6. Maulana Mahmood Madani   | 19. Sheikh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi                          |
| 7. HRE Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III | 20. Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr                       |
| 8. HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah                                      | 21. Maulana Nazur Rahman                                |
| 9. Dr Yahya Cholil Staquf   | 22. Professor Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad) |
| 10. HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa  | 23. HE Sheikh Ibrahim Salih                             |
| 11. Sheikh Habib 'Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri                        | 24. Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri,                 |
| 12. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson   | 25. Dr Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas                    |
| 13. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse                                 | 26. Dr Amr Khalid                                       |
|   | 27. Professor Mustafa Abu Sway                          |



- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 28. HE Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi Amoli | 34. Aminu Ado Bayero              |
| 29. HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq Fayadh | 35. Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani       |
| 30. HE Dr Aref Ali Nayed                     | 36. Sheikh Nuh Keller             |
| 31. Professor M Din Syamsuddin               | 37. Dr Muhammad Al-Arifi          |
| 32. Professor Akbar Ahmed                    | 38. Dr Zakir Abdul Karim Naik     |
| 33. Dr Ingrid Mattson                        | 39. Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais |

---

*Social Issues, Science, Arts & Culture and Sports*

---

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. HE Sheikh Uthman Taha | 6. Malala Yousufzai     |
| 2. Mohammed Salah        | 7. Dr. Ugur Sahin       |
| 3. Mohamed Bechari       | 8. Sami Yusuf           |
| 4. Ahd Tamimi            | 9. Saadio Mane          |
| 5. Loujain al-Hathloul   | 10. Khabib Nurmagomedov |

**Country:** Yemen

**Born:** 27 May 1963 (age 60)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Spiritual leader and Preacher, Lineage

**Influence:** Millions of traditional Muslim followers globally

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

2023 (11)

2022 (11)

2021 (9)

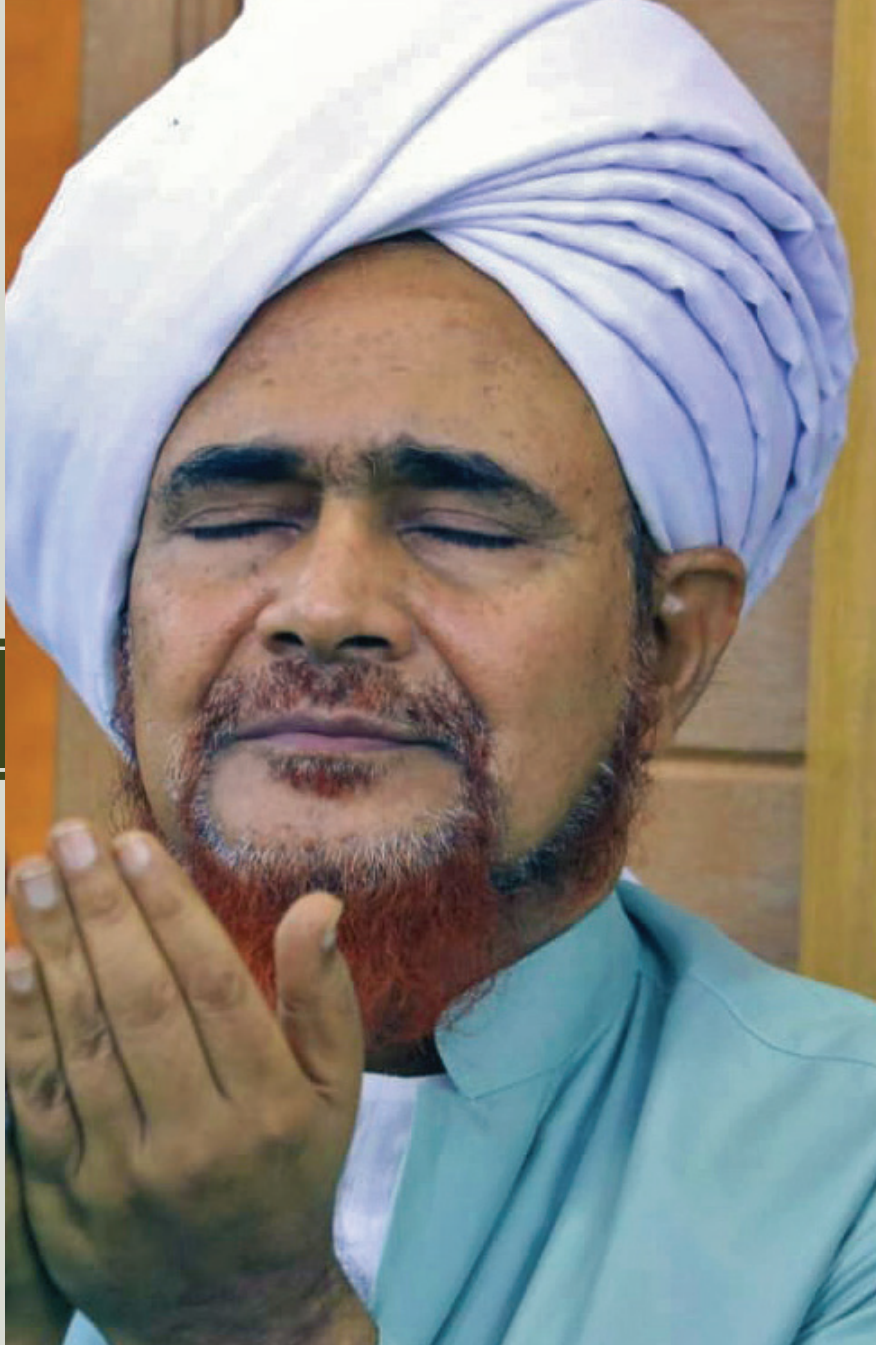
*"A true Muslim is like rain, wherever it falls, it will benefit."*

# 15

is the age at which he started teaching and doing dawah.

# 1993

the year Dar Al-Mustafa was founded



﴿ 1 ﴾

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz

# HE Sheikh Al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz

## Director of Dar Al-Mustafa

HE Sheikh Al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz, a 39th-generation direct descendant of the Prophet ﷺ, stands as one of the foremost scholars, spiritual guides, and preachers within the Islamic tradition today. His prominent position in the Ba Alawi Tariqa further extends his influence over hundreds of millions of Muslims around the globe.

**The Ba Alawi:** The Ba Alawi, derived from “Banu Alawi” or “the clan of Alawi”, have called the Hadramaut region in Yemen their home since 4th century Hijri (CE 930) when a member of the Prophet’s family emigrated there. The Ba Alawi lineage has since produced exceptional scholars and devout individuals, celebrated for their efforts in propagating and revitalizing Islamic teachings, anchoring their approach in Imam Al-Ghazali’s renowned work, the *Ihya Ulum Al-Din*. They have played a pivotal role in spreading and reviving Islam in various regions, including the Malay Archipelago (Malaysia and Indonesia) through the revered Wali Sanga (the Nine Saints—eight of whom were from the Ba Alawi), in various regions of India such as Kerala and Gujarat, in East Africa in the 20th century through figures like Habib Umar bin Sumayt and Habib Ahmad Mashhur Al-Haddad and in general with Habib Abdul Qadir Al-Saqqaf. Habib Umar continues this legacy on a global scale, with tours that extend to the USA, Australia and Europe.

**Dar Al-Mustafa:** Following the unification of Yemen, Habib Umar founded Dar Al-Mustafa in 1993—a centre dedicated to traditional Islamic scholarship. It is grounded in three fundamental principles: acquiring knowledge from qualified sources through an authentic chain of transmission; purifying the soul and refining character; and engaging in dawah, the call to faith through the dissemination of beneficial knowledge. This institute started with 30 hand-picked students by Habib Umar and thousands have now graduated from it. Students from all corners of the world enrol in the institute, and upon their return to their home countries, they take the role of influential educators, often by establishing their own educational institutions. In 2001, a sister institution, Dar Al-Zahra, was inaugurated, expanding religious instruction to females. Since then, additional branches have been established not only across various parts of Yemen but also in Southeast Asia. Two other nearby religious institutions which are closely linked to

Dar Al-Mustafa are the Rubat Tarim (est.1886) and Al-Ahgaaff University (est.1995).

**Popular Presence:** Habib Umar is extraordinarily active and frequently conducts gatherings both domestically and internationally. In 2023, a tour of Indonesia attracted over 700,000 attendees at his events. His online presence is facilitated through Muwasala, an organization established by his students. He has a social media following of over 3.5 million and his videos have collectively garnered more than 100 million views. His influence extends even further through his esteemed reputation within the Nahdlatul Ulama, the world’s largest Islamic organization, which boasts a staggering membership of over 90 million. Within this organization, Habib Umar is a reference point for all matters related to religious affairs. His monthly online readings to this vast community reinforce his influence in the Islamic world. Many of Habib Umar’s students have risen to prominence as distinguished teachers in their own right and extend his influence further, like Habib Ali Al-Jifri, Habib Kadhim Al-Saqqaf and Habib Muhammad Al-Saqqaf who established *Al-Erth Al-Nabawi* (the Prophetic legacy) satellite channel which broadcasts Habib Umar’s daily classes as well as being a platform for an array of traditional scholars.

**Scholarship:** Habib Umar ranks among the world’s preeminent Muslim academics and scholars. His role as a signatory of “A Common Word Between Us and You” has helped to foster understanding between Muslims and Christians. He has authored a number of works that have been translated into several languages. They include *Al-Dhakhirah Al-Musharrafah*, a compendium of essential knowledge for every Muslim, three concise hadith collections, and a summary of the third quarter of Imam Al-Ghazali’s *Ihya Ulum Al-Din*. Furthermore, his compositions for the *mawlid*, *Al-Diya’ Al-Lami’* and *Al-Sharab Al-Tahur* are recited at gatherings worldwide. He is the recipient of the King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies (2016) and the Sheikh Zayed Award for Human Fraternity (2021), but worth far more than any award is the testimony of many that Habib Umar precisely emulates the character of the Prophet, both in religious practice (*ibadah*) and human interaction (*mu’amalah*).

**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 31 December 1935 (age 88)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** King with authority over 37 million residents of Saudi Arabia and approximately 14 million pilgrims annually.

**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

2023 (1)

2022 (2)

2021 (2)

*"My primary goal is to be an exemplary and leading nation in all aspects, and I will work with you in achieving this endeavour."*

**\$15** million

pledged in aid to Rohingya Muslims

**5**

World Heritages sites



۞ 2 ۞

*His Majesty*

**King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud**



# HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

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

HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud was proclaimed the 7th king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in January 2015, after the passing of King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz. He had previously held the position of Crown Prince from June 2012. King Salman's 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 Makkah and Madinah, 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 dawah network, which makes its influence felt in all Muslim countries. On 21 June 2017, King Salman appointed his son, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz as Crown Prince of the Kingdom.

**Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques:** HM King Salman has significant influence in the global Muslim community through his custodianship of the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah. Makkah is the main pilgrimage site for 2 billion Muslims. Each year approximately 2-3 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. A multi-billion-dollar expansion to the two mosques is well under way.

**Controller of Oil Reserves:** HM King Salman reigns over a land of massive crude oil reserves—Saudi Arabia has approximately 20% of the world's proven oil reserves—making him a key player in the global petroleum industry. Although oil revenues declined by 28% compared to the previous year, Saudi Arabia's non-oil revenues jumped 13% in the second quarter of 2023.

**Head of the World's Largest Dawah Network:** King Salman is also head of the most extensive dawah 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. Its violent offshoots have meant that Saudi Arabia itself is now a target for them.

**Humanitarian:** The King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Aid (KSRelief) was established in 2015 delivering aid internationally to victims of civil war and natural disasters. KSRelief has funded over

\$6 billion in more than 2,000 projects in 92 countries. Projects included assisting Syrian patients living in Zataari Syrian refugee camp in Jordan and providing prosthetic limbs to Yemeni civilians wounded during the war. KSRelief signed a memorandum of cooperation with UNICEF and signed an agreement with the UNHCR to support the families affected by war.

**Saudi 2030:** A number of mega projects and initiatives show the dazzling changes currently underway in the Kingdom: the construction of a linear smart city called NEOM which will be 170-km long and 200-m wide, estimated to cost \$500 billion in total; the sponsorship of an array of sports including golf, football bringing the Kingdom the world's attention; political and economic strategic changes are also underway as part of the Saudi 2030 vision.

**Key Appointments:** The transfer of power from the sons of the founder of Saudi Arabia, King Abdul-Aziz, to the new generation, which some feared would be an issue that would split the country, has been remarkably smooth so far. HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman is the second Crown Prince from the new generation appointed by King Salman. These appointees have brought changes in law which have had monumental social effects, changes such as allowing women in Saudi Arabia to move freely and drive, and the promotion of cinemas and music concerts.

**Hajj:** The Hajj was severely curtailed for two years with only 1,000 and then 60,000 residents allowed to perform the pilgrimage, but in 2022 it opened for a million worldwide pilgrims and in 2023 for over 2.5 million pilgrims.

*Arabian leopard, Saudi Arabia*



**Country:** Iran

**Born:** 16 July 1939 (age 84)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative

**Influence:** Supreme Leader of 89 million Iranians

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

2023 (2)

2022 (3)

2021 (3)

*"The purpose of Hajj is to unify the Islamic Ummah against disbelief, oppression, arrogance, and human and non-human idols."*

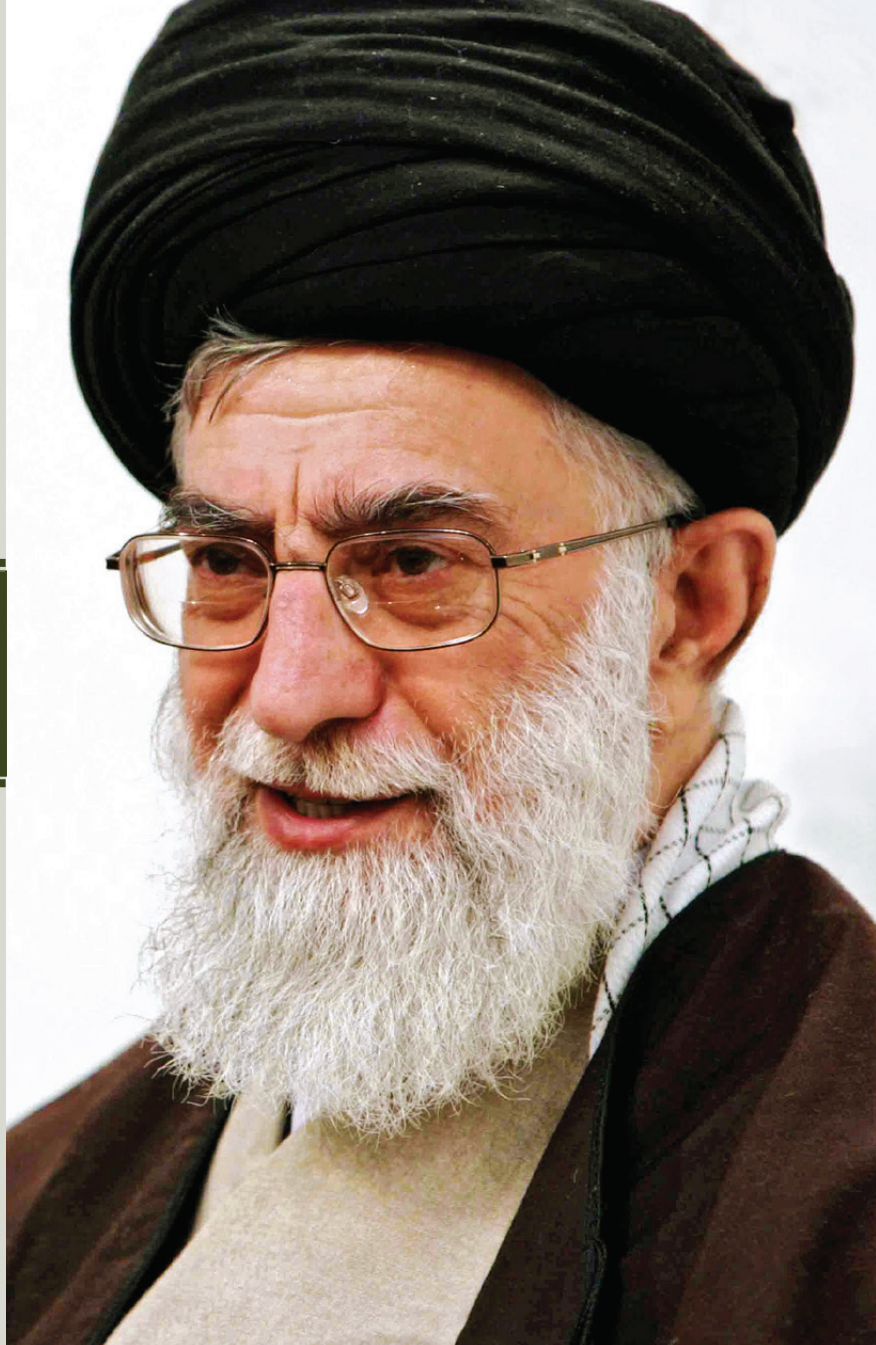
15<sup>th</sup>

in nanotechnology research

\$25

billion

annual military budget



۞ 3 ۞

*His Eminence*

Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei



# HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei

## Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Grand Ayatollah Khamenei is the second 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 60s and 70s. 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.

**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 Shia Islam the national religion of Iran in the early 16th century under the rule of the Safavids. It was conceived 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 Shia 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 2 September 2010 Khamenei issued a historic fatwah 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 fatwah was received with great appreciation by the Chancellor of Al-Azhar University, Sheikh Ahmad

Al-Tayyeb.

**Sanctions:** Since 1979, the United States has used sanctions to try to influence Iran's policies, including Iran's uranium enrichment program. The sanctions have had a detrimental effect on many aspects of life in the country. In 2015, Iran and the P5+1 (the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany) agreed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which limited Iran's nuclear activities and allowed international inspectors in return for the lifting of economic sanctions. This agreement worked for four years before President Trump unilaterally withdrew from it and subsequently imposed stricter sanctions on Iran and secondary sanctions for countries still buying Iranian oil. The Biden administration has signalled returning to the JCPOA, but this will require further negotiation with the new President Ebrahim Raisi.

**Current Issues:** Iran's role in the Syrian and Yemeni conflicts and how it maintains its relationships with the Arab world are key issues that require Khamenei's lead. The US-assassinated Major General Qasem Soleimani in January 2020, and although Iran replied by firing missiles at a US base in Iraq, this issue seems far from resolved for many. Khamenei has stressed Iran's strong relationship with Russia following the war in Ukraine.

*Pallas's cat, Iran*



**Country:** Qatar

**Born:** 3 June 1980 (age 43)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** Ruler of richest country per capita in the world

**School of Thought:** Sunni Hanbali

2023 (3)

2022 (1)

2021 (11)

*"How beautiful it is for people to put aside what divides them in order to celebrate their diversity and what brings them together at the same time."*

**\$83** thousand  
GDP per capita

**563** kilometers  
of coastline



۞ 4 ۞

*His Highness*

Emir Sheik Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani



# HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani

## Emir of Qatar

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani became the Emir of Qatar at the age of 33 after his father, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, abdicated in June 2013. Qatar is the richest country in the world with a GDP per capita of \$84k. It has under 400,000 citizens whilst the rest of its population of 3 million are expatriate workers. It is the top exporter of liquefied natural gas and the site of the third largest natural gas reserves in the world.

**Family:** Sheikh Tamim is Sheikh Hamad's fourth son and was chosen as Crown Prince in August 2003. His mother is the powerful Sheikha Moza, who still plays a prominent public role as an advocate for social and educational causes.

**Education:** Sheikh Tamim completed his studies at a private school in the UK before going on to graduate at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst (in 1998). During his time as Crown Prince (2003-13), Sheikh Tamim had exposure to a wide range of posts including security (he was deputy commander of the armed forces), economics (chairman of the Qatar Investment Authority) and sports. He supervised Qatar's successful bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

**Expectations:** Qatar exploded onto the world scene under his father's reign, and expectations are that Sheikh Tamim will try to consolidate these achievements. Packing a punch far above its weight has led to neighbouring countries questioning the purpose of so many initiatives. He has had to repair relations with other Gulf countries over supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and defend Qatar's world image over the treatment of labourers in Qatar.

**Blockade:** In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt, with the backing of the Trump administration, cut all relations with Qatar and imposed trade and travel bans. This drastic action resulted from various claims that Qatar was

supporting terrorism and had violated a 2014 agreement with GCC countries. Its good relations with Iran and its hosting Al-Jazeera TV network were also factors in this tense situation which saw food-stuff imported from Iran and Turkish soldiers called in to help safeguard Qatar assets. A further complicating factor in this family feud was that Qatar hosts the largest American base in the Middle East and all the blockade partners are close allies of the US. The 43-month blockade was finally lifted in January 2021, having made little impact.

**Peace Broker:** With the Emir enjoying good international relations and continuing foreign investment, Qatar has positioned itself into the role of regional peace broker. Qatar hosted the historic signing of a peace deal between the US and the Taliban in 2020 which led to the full withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. During the Fourth High-Level Strategic Dialogue between the State of Qatar and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) in 2022, the State of Qatar was noted as the second largest contributor to the United Nations Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism out of a total 35 other donors. It has adopted a strong position of proactive engagement through dialogue with regional neighbours.

**Investor:** Qatar continues to increase its influence through major investments globally. The Qatar Investment Authority has over \$475bn in assets ensuring it is a major player in global finance.

**FIFA World Cup 2022:** The 2022 FIFA World Cup was a great success. The vast logistic challenge was met and the actual football produced one of the best world cups in history. In an iconic moment, the Emir of Qatar put a *bisht*, a traditional Arab cloak, on Argentina captain Lionel Messi during the World Cup trophy presentation after Argentina's win over France in the final.

*Sand cat, Qatar*



**Country:** Jordan

**Born:** 30 January 1962 (age 61)

**Source of Influence:** Custodian of the Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

**Influence:** King with authority over 10.5 million Jordanians; outreach to Traditional Islam

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (5)

2022 (5)

2021 (4)

*"We affirm our commitment to carrying out our religious and historical duty in protecting the Holy Sites in Jerusalem"*

**41<sup>st</sup>** generation

direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Over

**3.7** million  
tourists visited Jordan in  
2023



۞ 5 ۞

*His Majesty*

**King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein**

# HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein

## King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Custodian of the Christian and Muslim Holy Sites in Jerusalem

HM King Abdullah II is the constitutional monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Supreme Commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, The Arab Army. He is also the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem.

**Location:** King Abdullah is not the leader of a rich or populous country, nor is he a religious scholar, but what makes his role vital is being the linchpin to the central cause of the Islamic world: the issue of Palestine and Jerusalem, and his being the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites there. There are over 12 million Palestinians in the world, 3 million in Jordan itself, around another 5 million in the occupied territories and Israel, and 2 million in Gaza. As Palestine is not recognized as a state by the entire international community, the responsibility for an equitable peace falls largely on its nextdoor neighbour Jordan, and on King Abdullah II in particular, especially as his family have been the hereditary Custodians of the Holy Sites from before the creation of the state of Jordan itself. Moreover, in the face of increased pressure to dissolve the very notion of Palestinian identity, dissolve UNRWA and illegally and unilaterally grant Jerusalem to Israel, King Abdullah has been the only influential voice actively—but responsibly—resisting this catastrophe for the Islamic world. Moreover, Jerusalem is one of Islam's three holiest sites and is as holy to Muslims as it is to Jews and Christians, and its loss would represent a grievance based not only on justice but on faith to all the world's 2.1 billion Muslims, a situation with explosive potential consequences, to say the least.

**Lineage:** King Abdullah II is a 41st-generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through the line of the Prophet's grandson Al-Hasan. The Hashemite Dynasty is the second-oldest ruling dynasty in the world, after that of Japan. As the current bearer of the Hashemite legacy, HM King Abdullah II has a unique prestige in the Islamic world, in addition to his being the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem (and of course Jordan itself).

**Longevity:** King Abdallah II is now the longest-serving Arab ruler. His father King Hussein himself ruled for 47 years and was the longest-serving Arab leader when he died in 1999.

**Support for Jerusalem (Al-Quds):** HM King Abdullah II is the custodian of Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem, the sacred compound which contains Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Indeed, the Hashemite Custodianship of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem is essential in safeguarding the pre-1967 Status Quo at the Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The Status Quo is a critical insurance against attempts at temporal and spatial division of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and Judaizing its surroundings. His Majesty is also the custodian of Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem. He has firmly supported the upkeep and renovation of these sites. In 2016 King Abdullah issued a Royal Benefaction to provide for the restoration of Jesus' Tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, at his own personal expense. And in 2018 he helped fund the restoration of the entire Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem from his own funds, in particular the US\$1.4 million received from the 2018 Templeton Prize.

**Reformer:** HM King Abdullah's progressive vision for Jordan is based on political openness, economic and social development, and the Islamic values of goodwill and tolerance. Under his reign Jordan has witnessed sweeping constitutional changes (one third of the Constitution was amended), and political and social reforms aimed at increasing governmental transparency and accountability.

**Islamic Outreach:** In response to growing Islamophobia in the West in the wake of 9/11 and rising sectarian strife, King Abdullah II launched the Amman Message initiative in 2004 (see page 49), which was unanimously adopted by the Islamic World's political and temporal leaderships. King Abdullah II is also credited with one of the world's most authoritative websites on the Holy Qur'an and Tafsir: the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought's [Al-tafsir.com](http://Al-tafsir.com) (see page 163). He also founded the World Islamic Sciences and Education University (W.I.S.E.) in Jordan (see [www.wise.edu.jo](http://www.wise.edu.jo)) in 2008. In 2012, King Abdullah II set up integral Professorial chairs for the study of the work of Imam Al-Ghazali at the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Imam Al-Razi at the King Hussein Mosque. In 2019 King Abdullah established the Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Suyuti's



Work at Al-Husseini Grand Mosque. And in 2022 His Majesty established the Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Nawawi's Work at Al-Salt Grand Mosque and at the World Islamic Sciences and Education University (W.I.S.E.). In 2014 King Abdullah established a fellowship for the study of love in religion at Regent's Park College, Oxford University.

**Majalla Law:** 80% of Jordan's laws are based on the Ottoman Majalla and hence on traditional Hanafi shariah. Jordan has a Chief Mufti, official muftis in every province, army and police grand muftis and shariah courts for all personal status issues for Muslims. Yet it has Orthodox-Priest-run courts for its native Christian population in Christian personal status issues, and Jordan guarantees Christian seats in the Parliament and de facto at every level of government. It has civil law for all citizens and additional tribal laws and customs for tribesmen and tribeswomen.

**Interfaith Outreach:** HM King Abdullah II is also lauded as an interfaith leader for his support of the 2007 A Common Word initiative (see page 121). He was also the initiator and driving force behind the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution in 2010 (see page 152). In 2014 HM King Abdullah hosted HH Pope Francis in Jordan (having previously hosted both HH Pope Benedict XVI and HH Pope John Paul II). In 2015 the Baptism Site of Jesus Christ on Jordan's River Bank was unanimously voted a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Thus, at the same time that DA'ISH was destroying Syria and Iraq's historical and archaeological treasures, King Abdullah was preserving not just Muslim Holy Sites, but Christian Holy Sites and universal historical and

religious treasures as well.

**Safe Haven:** Jordan has around 2 million registered and unregistered refugees from Syria and Iraq and other regional conflicts (such as Libya and Yemen), in addition to around 2 million refugees from the Palestine conflict. Despite its paucity of resources, Jordan has welcomed and accommodated a staggering number of refugees and is seen by many as the most stable country in a turbulent region. It has the highest percentage of refugees of any country in the world.

**Templeton Prize Winner 2018:** HM King Abdullah was awarded the 2018 Templeton Prize, the most prestigious prize in the world in religious affairs. He is the second Muslim, and the first statesman, ever to be granted this honour. The prize recognizes those who have "made an exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension". The judges mentioned in particular King Abdullah's work in promoting intra-Islamic religious harmony, reclaiming the narrative from extremists, as well as between Islam and other faiths.

**Reform:** In 2021, HM King Abdullah II pushed for political modernization and announced the introduction of a new committee of 92 members tasked to modernize the political system and to propose new laws for local governments. The committee proposed draft laws for political parties and elections, as well as 22 amendments to the Jordan Constitution regarding parliamentary work and empowering women and youth.

*Caracal, Jordan*





# THE AMMAN MESSAGE



www.AmmanMessage.com

*[T]he best resource for those who wish to travel along the straight path in their words and their actions, and in their spiritual and religious life.*

— The Grand Sheikh of the Azhar, Sheikh Mohammed Sayyid Tantawi رحمته الله, 2006.

The Amman Message started as a detailed statement released the eve of the 27th of Ramadan 1425 AH / 9th November 2004 CE by H. M. King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein in Amman, Jordan. It sought to declare what Islam is and what it is not, and what actions represent it and what actions do not. Its goal was to clarify to the modern world the true nature of Islam and the nature of true Islam.

In order to give this statement more religious authority, H. M. King Abdullah II then sent the following three questions to 24 of the most senior religious scholars from all around the world representing all the branches and schools of Islam: (1) Who is a Muslim? (2) Is it permissible to declare someone an apostate (*takfir*)? (3) Who has the right to undertake issuing *fatwas* (legal rulings)?

Based on the fatwas provided by these great scholars (who included the Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Ayatollah Sistani, and Sheikh Qaradawi), in July 2005 CE, H. M. King Abdullah II convened an international Islamic conference of 200 of the world's leading Islamic scholars (*ulema*) from 50 countries. In Amman, the scholars unanimously issued a ruling on three fundamental issues (which became known as the 'Three Points of the Amman Message'):

- They specifically recognised the validity of all 8 *mathhabs* (legal schools) of Sunni, Shia, and Ibadhi Islam; of traditional Islamic Theology (Ash'arism); of Islamic Mysticism (Sufism), and of true Salafi thought, and came to a precise definition of who is a Muslim.
- Based upon this definition they forbade *takfir* (declarations of apostasy) between Muslims.
- Based upon the Mathahib they set forth the subjective and objective preconditions for the issuing of *fatwas*, thereby exposing ignorant and illegitimate edicts in the name of Islam.

These Three Points were then unanimously adopted by the Islamic World's political and temporal leaderships at the Organization of the Islamic Conference summit at Makkah in December 2005. And over a period of one year from July 2005 to July 2006, the Three Points were also unanimously adopted by six other international Islamic scholarly assemblies, culminating with the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of Jeddah, in July 2006. In total, over 500 leading Muslim scholars worldwide—as can be seen on this website—unanimously endorsed the Amman Message and its Three Points.

This amounts to a historical, universal and unanimous religious and political consensus (*ijma'*) of the Ummah (nation) of Islam in our day, and a consolidation of traditional, orthodox Islam. The significance of this is: (1) that it is the first time in over a thousand years that the Ummah has formally and specifically come to such a pluralistic mutual inter-recognition; and (2) that such a recognition is religiously legally binding on Muslims since the Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) said: My Ummah will not agree upon an error (Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, Kitab al-Fitan, Hadith no. 4085).

This is good news not only for Muslims, for whom it provides a basis for unity and a solution to infighting, but also for non-Muslims. For the safeguarding of the legal methodologies of Islam (the *mathahib*) necessarily means inherently preserving traditional Islam's internal 'checks and balances'. It thus assures balanced Islamic solutions for essential issues like human rights; women's rights; freedom of religion; legitimate jihad; good citizenship of Muslims in non-Muslim countries, and just and democratic government. It also exposes the illegitimate opinions of radical fundamentalists and terrorists from the point of view of true Islam. As George Yeo, the Foreign Minister of Singapore, declared in the 60th Session of the U. N. General Assembly (about the Amman Message): "Without this clarification, the war against terrorism would be much harder to fight."

**Country:** UAE

**Born:** 11 March 1961 (age 62)

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

**Influence:** Military and political leadership

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (8)

2022 (8)

2021 (7)

*"The UAE and tolerance are two sides of the same coin and is an embodiment of people's lifelong endeavour to achieve through history."*

1<sup>st</sup>

Abu Dhabi ranked safest city in the world

11%

of the population are Emirati citizens



ﷺ 6 ﷻ

*His Highness*

President Sheikh Mohamed  
bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

# HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

## President of the UAE

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan became the President of the UAE after his brother, Sheikh Khalifa, passed away in May 2022. He is the third son of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, the widely respected first President of the UAE who ruled from independence in 1971 until his death in 2004.

**Military Leadership:** Sheikh Mohamed has transformed the military capabilities of the UAE not only through buying military hardware (over 80 F-16 jets), but also by developing the UAE's own industry, both hardware and special forces. All of these have also been deployed in various conflicts including Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Libya and Yemen. The UAE is an important centre for global weapons' trading, hosting the world's largest defence expos.

**Global Player:** Sheikh Mohamed has enjoyed excellent personal relationships with the previous US presidents managing to have his views heard on Iran, the Muslim Brotherhood, Palestine and the support of a young Saudi prince. Further, Sheikh Mohamed has shown that he is his own man by following policies that the US does not support publicly: the support of Libyan general Khalifa Haftar and the blockade on Qatar. Involvement in other key issues shows that the UAE is punching above its weight in international affairs. Its involvement in Yemen has become increasingly complex with a split with Saudi policy meaning their respective proxies on the ground are fighting each other as well as local forces and proxies of Iran. The humanitarian disaster in Yemen is of an immense magnitude with many voices squarely laying the brunt of the blame on the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

**Abraham Accords:** The UAE (along with Bahrain) formalized relations with Israel by signing the Abraham Accords Peace Treaty at the White House in September 2020 with the Israeli Prime Minister and the former American President Trump in attendance. An Israeli embassy was opened in July 2021 with the President of Israel in attendance as the UAE pushes ahead with a full normalization strategy which has outraged Palestinians and their supporters.

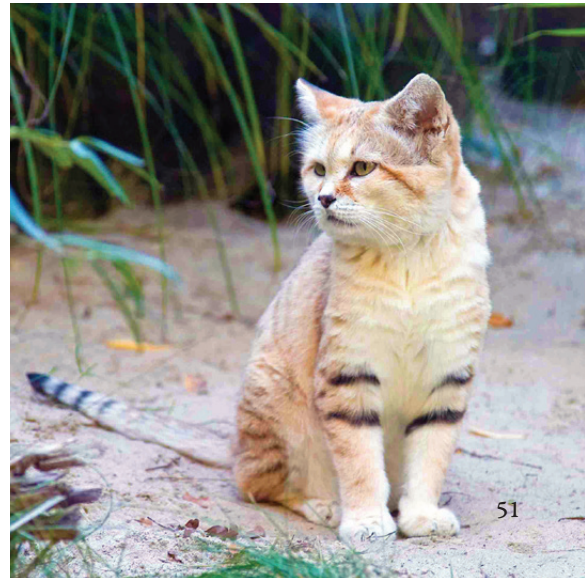
**Economic Development:** With Abu Dhabi sitting on a 10th of the world's proven oil reserves, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan maintains immense political influence in the Muslim World as a leading member of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company—

which directs development efforts for the UAE's role in the oil and gas industries. He also controls one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds (\$853bn). He has overseen a construction boom which includes man-made islands, entertainment parks and museum franchises of the Louvre and the Guggenheim.

**Sustainable Development and Conservationist:** Sheikh Mohamed 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. He is also a keen falconer and is committed to protecting falcons and other species in the region.

**Philanthropy and Tolerance:** Sheikh Mohamed has donated billions of dollars to various causes, including AED 55 million to the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, and purchasing vaccines in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Abu Dhabi Fund for Development celebrated its 50-year anniversary in 2021; it has given over AED 150 billion in development funding and investments in 97 countries. The UAE is home to a diverse workforce and has been keen to show respect to other religions and cultures. It has allowed various houses of worship to be built, and three synagogues have already been completed. In addition, in 2023, the Abrahamic Family House was inaugurated. Encompassing a mosque, a church, a synagogue and a forum for gathering and dialogue, this space welcomes people from all walks of life to exchange knowledge and practice faith.

*Sand cat, UAE*





**Country:** Türkiye

**Born:** 26 Feb 1954 (age 69)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** President of 86 million Turkish citizens

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (4)

2022 (4)

2021 (1)

*"If we look at history, we will see that regimes which persecute [their people] do not remain standing."*

**2,023**<sub>metre</sub>  
the world's longest suspension bridge

**52%**  
of the vote won by Erdoğan



7

*His Excellency*

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan



# HE President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

## President of the Republic of Türkiye

HE Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the Prime Minister of Türkiye for 11 years, winning three consecutive elections with a majority (2002, 2007 and 2011), before becoming Türkiye's first popularly elected president in August 2014, securing a second term in the 2018 election and then winning a hard-fought 2023 election. During his terms, Türkiye has seen unprecedented economic growth, constitutional reform, and a re-emergence as a major global power. All this, combined with his unapologetic voice on the world stage and support of Muslim issues, have won over Muslims worldwide.

**President:** Erdoğan secured 52.1% of the vote in the second round run off in the 2023 presidential election. This was a continuation of his remarkable popularity and success at the ballot box over the past two decades. During his time as President he has pushed for more powers for his post, criticized by many as signs of wanting excessive power. He has lost support from key members of his own party and been criticized for cracking down on the media.

**Challenges:** 'Erdonomics', as the President's unorthodox, economic policies are referred to, have driven down the lira 80% over the last five years, resulting in inflation problems. The appointment of Mehmet Şimşek is a sign that economic policies will return to more orthodox policies. In February 2023, a catastrophic earthquake in southeastern Türkiye killed more than 50,000 people and the President and government were criticized for their slow response. Despite this, both the AKP and the President comprehensively won most of the election votes in the earthquake hit regions.

**Failed Coup Ramifications:** The failed coup of 15 July 2016, which led to about 200 deaths, has led to huge ramifications as Erdoğan looks to root out all those involved. He has squarely laid the blame of orchestrating the coup on Fethullah Gülen, and has led an all-out attack on Gülen's organizations and supporters. There has been a major crackdown on many sectors with about 160,000 civil servants being dismissed in various state institutions, with over half from the education sector. Also, 50,000 people remain in detention with this number continually rising as authorities press ahead with regular raids.

**Between the US and Russia:** Ties with the US have strained considerably since Türkiye decided to purchase the Russian S-400 defence system instead

of the Patriot surface-to-air missile system. The US responded by suspending Türkiye from the F-35 jet programme and holding up other arms deals. Türkiye is playing a balancing role with Russia following the latter's war with Ukraine, and is key for Europe's energy flow.

**Hagia Sophia:** Hagia Sophia, built in 537 as the patriarchal cathedral of Constantinople, was converted into the Fatih Mosque after Sultan Mehmed II conquered the city in 1453. In 1935, and in line with his effort to erase Türkiye's Islamic identity, Atatürk converted Hagia Sophia into a museum. In July 2020, Erdoğan reversed Atatürk's decision and reclassified Hagia Sophia as a mosque—a decision celebrated by most Muslims.

**Soft Power:** The soft power of the Turkish film industry has played a large part in growing Türkiye's influence throughout the Muslim world. Historical dramas about Sulayman the Magnificent and Sultan Abdul-Hamid II were hugely popular in the Arab world, but the drama about Ertuğrul, (*Diriliş: Ertuğrul*), the legendary father of the founder of the Ottoman Empire, has intensified and broadened this influence. Leaders of other Muslim countries have not only urged their citizens to watch it but have also taken it as a model with which to develop their own indigenous dramas.

**Name Change:** In 2022 an official request for Turkey to be changed to Türkiye (tur-key-YAY) as it is spelled and pronounced in Turkish was accepted by the UN. The country has called itself Türkiye since its declaration of independence in 1923.

*Eurasian lynx, Türkiye*



**Country:** Pakistan  
**Born:** 5 October 1943 (age 80)  
**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage  
**Influence:** Leading scholar for the Deobandis and in Islamic finance  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)  
2023 (6)  
2022 (6)  
2021 (5)

*“Fighting against national security agencies and carrying out anti-state activities come under mutiny and it has nothing to do with Jibad.”*

1866

the year Darul Uloom Deoband was established

3

thousand schools affiliated with Darul ‘Uloom



۞ 8 ۞

*His Eminence*

Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani



# HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani

## Leading Scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence and Finance

Justice Sheikh Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani is a leading scholar of Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic finance. He is considered to be the intellectual head of the Deobandi School of Islamic learning, as well as an authority outside of the Deobandi School. He served as Judge of the Shari'at Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan from 1982 to May 2002.

**Deobandi De Facto Leader:** 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. His views and fatwahs are taken as the final word by Deobandi scholars globally, including those at the Deoband seminary in India. Usmani was born in Deoband, India, the son of Mufti Muhammad Shafi (the former Grand Mufti of Pakistan) who founded the Darul Uloom, Karachi, a leading centre of Islamic education in Pakistan. He has authority to teach hadith from Sheikh al-Hadith Mawlana Zakariya Khandelawi amongst others, and he traversed the spiritual path of *tasawwuf* under the guidance of Sheikh Dr Abdul Hayy Arifi, a student of the great revivalist scholar of India, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi. His students in the thousands are spread across the globe as leaders and imams, especially in the Indian subcontinent, central Asia and many Western countries. Deobandis consider themselves orthodox Hanafi Sunnis rooted in a foundation of sufi teaching, but allowing for a broad spectrum of interpretation which accommodates politically passive members of the Taliban.

**Leading Islamic Finance Scholar:** Usmani's other influence comes from his position as a global authority on 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 Sharia Council for the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) in Bahrain. He is also a permanent member of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, one of the highest legal bodies in the Muslim world.

**Writer:** He has translated the Qur'an both into English and Urdu. He is the author of a six-volume Arabic hadith commentary on Sahih Muslim. He is the Chief Editor of both the Urdu and English monthly magazine *Albalagh*, and regularly contributes articles to leading Pakistani newspapers on a range of issues. His legal edicts (fatwahs), written over a period of 45 years, are published in four large volumes. He has authored more than 143 books in Arabic, English, and Urdu.

**New Works:** He is directly supervising *The Hadith Encyclopaedia*, a masterful, pioneering compilation which will provide a universal number to each hadith in a manner that will make referencing any hadith as easy as it is to refer to a verse of the Qur'an. The Encyclopaedia will be over 300 volumes. A second major work recently published is entitled *The Jurisprudence (Fiqh) of Trade*. The book concludes with a proposed Code of Islamic Law of Sale of Goods and Transfer of Property, which serves as a powerful call to action for regulators and standard setting organizations alike.

**Assassination Attempt:** On 22 March 2019, as Mufti Taqi was on his way to deliver a Friday sermon, gunmen riding three motorbikes opened fire on his and an accompanying car. The Mufti, his wife and two grandchildren (a girl aged seven and boy aged five) miraculously survived the shower of bullets untouched, but two people lost their lives and a further two were severely injured. The Prime Minister of Pakistan condemned the attack as did scholars and politicians across the board. As of yet, no one has claimed responsibility for carrying out the attack. He was once again a target for assassination in 2021 and again in 2022.

**Honoured:** In 2019 Usmani was honoured with the Sitara-i Imtiaz (Star of Excellence) by the President of Pakistan. The Sitara-i Imtiaz is an honour and civilian award in the State of Pakistan, which recognizes individuals who have made an "especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of Pakistan, world peace, cultural or other significant public endeavours".

*Snow leopard, Pakistan*



**Country:** Iraq

**Born:** 4 August 1930 (age 93)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage

**Influence:** Highest authority for 21 million Iraqi Shia, and also internationally known as a religious authority to Usuli Twelver Shia

**School of Thought:** Traditional Twelver Shia, Usuli

2023 (9)

2022 (9)

2021 (8)

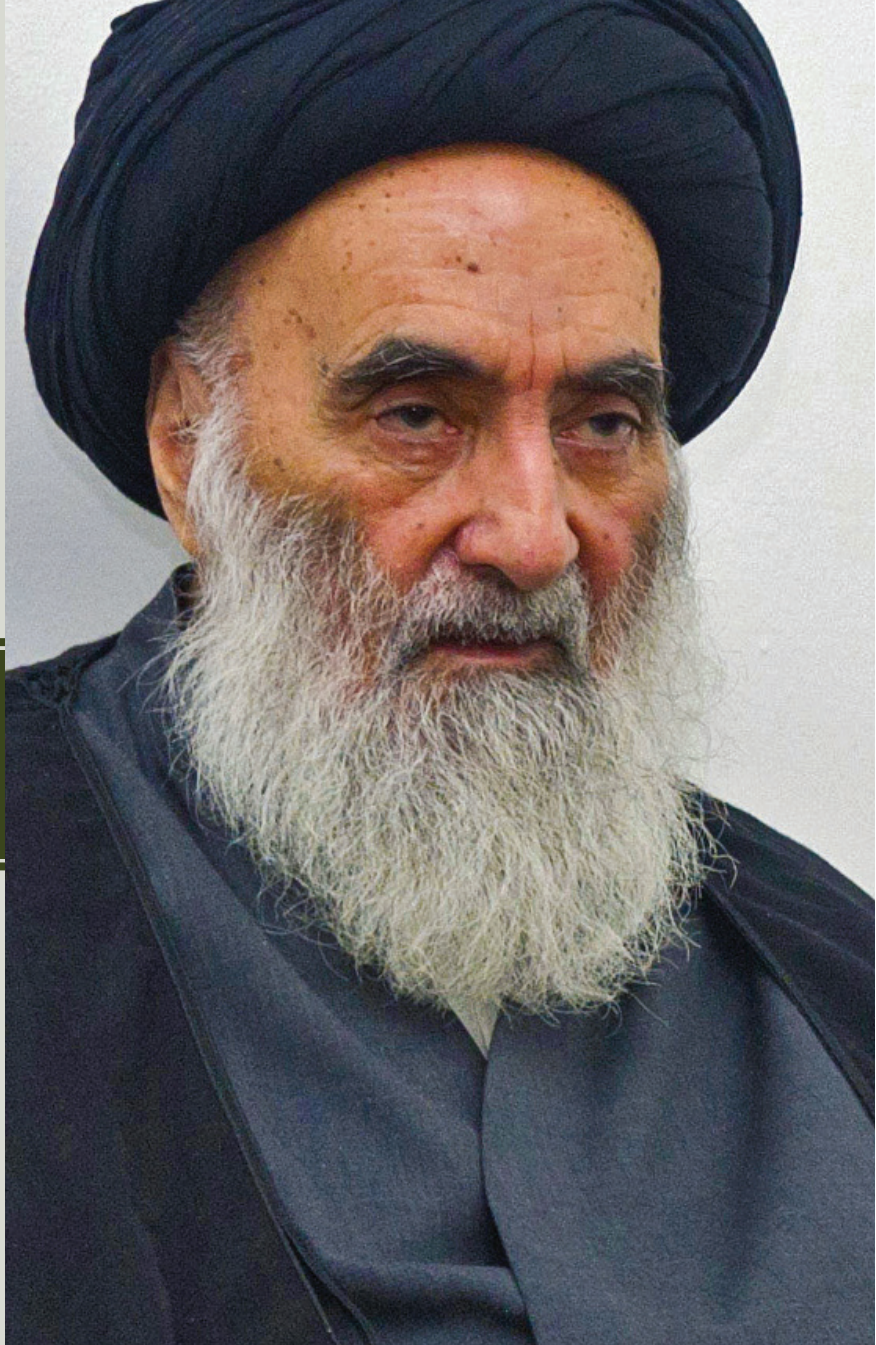
*"The more insight a person acquires, the richer they will be in wisdom and the more they will recognize [the fruits of] experience and potential errors."*

51

living Maraji

31

years old  
when he became a *mujtahid*



۞ 9 ۞

*His Eminence*

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani



# HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani

## Marja of the Hawza

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani is the prime *marja*, or spiritual reference for *Ithna Ashari'a* (Twelver) Shia Muslims, signifying his esteemed status as a source of emulation for Shia Muslims worldwide. He is widely recognized for his profound religious scholarship and spiritual leadership within the Shia Islamic tradition. His influence extends far beyond the religious sphere, encompassing a broad spectrum of social and political matters. He is the leading sheikh of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq and the preeminent Shia cleric globally.

**Preeminent Shia Cleric:** Sistani is descended from a family of religious scholars and was educated in the leading institutions of Iran. He later went to Najaf, Iraq to study under the Grand Ayatollah Abu Al-Qasim Al-Khoei. Upon Al-Khoei's death in 1992, Sistani took over as Grand Ayatollah, inheriting Khoei's following. He soon rose to become the leading cleric in Iraq.

**Marja Taqlid:** Sistani's influence in the Twelver Shia 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 Shia Islam. *Marja taqlid* means literally one who is worthy of being imitated—placing Sistani in a position of great authority over Twelver Shia Muslims. He is followed by an estimated 21 million Twelver Shia Muslims, making him the most influential *marja taqlid* in the world. He oversees a network of over 2,000 religious schools and seminaries in Iraq and around the world.

**Financial Influence:** Sistani also has very significant financial clout. As a *marja* his followers give him a religious tax (*khums*, Arabic for one-fifth). The redis-

tribution 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 Shia development organization in the world that maintains a network of educational and humanitarian establishments for both Shia and non-Shia Muslims. In 2022 it spent over \$100 million.

**Quietist Influence:** Significantly, Sistani is against the idea of Velayat-e Faqih, suggesting Shia clerics should not get involved in politics. Paradoxically this approach has afforded him very strong influence as a religious leader unsullied by politics. Sistani has used his position of quietist authority to wield influence also as a peacemaker in turbulent, post-invasion Iraq. His comments about the political scene have been credited with bringing about stability in key moments. He has identified eliminating political corruption and improving public services as the main issues of the day. He has also issued strong statements against DA'ISH, calling on Iraqis to unite against the militants.

**Protecting Minorities:** Grand Ayatollah Al-Sistani has played a significant role in Iraq's post-Saddam Hussein era, advocating for democracy and the protection of the rights of religious and ethnic minorities. His guidance has been instrumental in shaping the country's political landscape and promoting peaceful coexistence among its diverse population.

**Meetings:** Sistani rarely meets officials but made an exception for Iran's President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif in March 2019. Pope Francis also visited Sistani's home in Najaf in March 2021 during the Pope's visit to Iraq.

*Persian leopard, Iraq*



**Country:** Morocco

**Born:** 21 August 1963 (age 60)

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

**Influence:** King with authority over 37.8 million Moroccans

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

2023 (7)

2022 (7)

2021 (6)

*“The Kingdom of Morocco is keen to remain a model state, in which the followers of the monotheistic religions coexist in an environment of fraternity and security.”*

4<sup>th</sup>

Moroccan football team position in the 2022 World Cup

Over

8 thousand

scholarships awarded to Africans



❧ 10 ❧

*His Majesty*

King Mohammed VI



# HM King Mohammed VI

## King of Morocco

HM King Mohammed VI is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ 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 influences the network of Muslims following the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence and is a leading monarch in Africa.

**Four-Hundred-Year Alaouite Dynasty:** The 400-year-old Alaouite dynasty traces its lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It takes its name from Moulay Ali Cherif, who became Prince of Tafilalet in 1631. It sees itself as a continuation of the Andalusian Golden Age of Islam, which was characterized by peaceful co-existence, intellectual and cultural exchange and development.

**Influence on Maliki Network:** Morocco is home to the oldest university in the world, Al-Karaouine. This university is the centre 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 37.8 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-Maghribi (1735-1815 CE), the founder of the Tijaniyya 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.

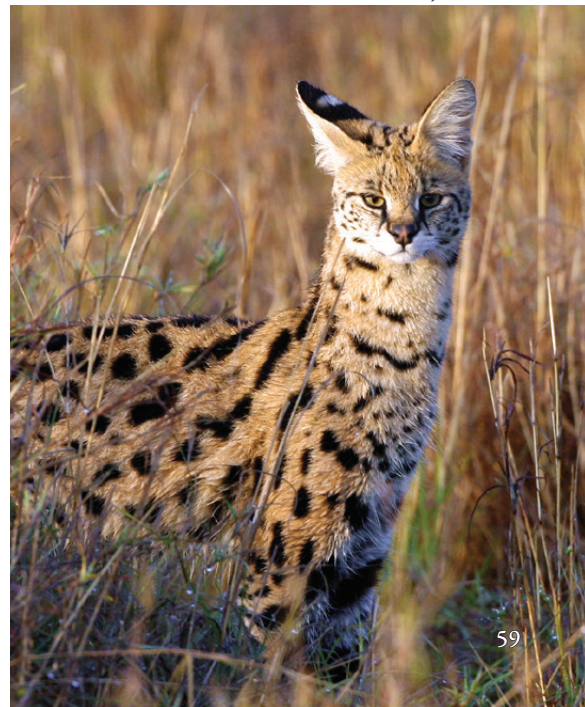
**The Marrakesh Declaration:** The King invited hundreds of the Islamic world's leading scholars to gather for a three-day summit in Marrakesh in January 2016 to address the question of the treatment of religious minorities in Muslim-majority communities. Basing

themselves on the Charter of Medina, also known as the Constitution of Medina, which was drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself, they issued calls for majority-Muslim communities to respect minorities' "freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defence". HM King Mohammed VI of Morocco delivered the inaugural address and pointed to the history of Islam's co-existence with other religions. This showed how Islam has enshrined the rights of religious minorities and promoted religious tolerance and diversity. (see page 124)

**Support for Jerusalem (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 Burraq Wall of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, to North African pilgrims in 1193. This 800-year-old quarter was demolished by the Israeli authorities in 1967 after they 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 King's gradual reforms have been hailed as a model for other Arab countries to follow.

*Serval, Morocco*



**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 14 December 1956 (age 68)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Media

**Influence:** 53 published books, supervised IslamToday.net, and reached millions through TV

**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

2023 (12)

2022 (12)

2021 (10)

*"You cannot call yourself patient until you are willing and able to bear things that you have no wish to bear."*

**2017**<sub>CE</sub>  
the year he was arrested

Over  
**20** million  
social media followers



❧ 11 ❧

Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda



# 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 became hugely 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. In September 2017, Al-Ouda was arrested by Saudi authorities along with 20 other Saudi clerics for tweets that were seen as offensive to the State. He is still imprisoned enduring months of solitary confinement.

**Key Scholar of Salafi Network:** Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda is a leading scholar of the Salafi movement having 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. He was imprisoned between 1994-1999 for calling for reforms within the country but softened his stance upon release. He is identified with the Sahwa movement, calling for peaceful political reform, more role for the clergy in politics and an opposition to western troops based in the Arabian Peninsula. His hugely influential website, IslamToday.net—a Saudi-funded website dedicated to providing Islamic educational resources in English, Arabic, French and Chinese—seems to have been shut down. He was active on social media until his arrest and until that time had 20 million followers.

**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-defence) 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. He has strongly condemned DA'ISH. He also called for peace and unity between members of the GCC and Qatar.

**Arrested on Charges Against the State:** Al-Ouda was arrested in September 2017 and charged for what ostensibly seems to be nothing more than tweets urging Saudi and Qatar to end a diplomatic rift. He had earlier voiced concerns about Saudi's human rights record, but perhaps his true crime has been not to publicly endorse and support the recent changes happening in Saudi Arabia. Al-Ouda has been held in punishing conditions, often in solitary confinement and detained incommunicado.

**Unjust Arrest:** With the public prosecutor calling for the maximum penalty to be implemented, there have been serious fears that Al-Ouda could be executed at any time. There has been outcry from a whole range of organizations about what is seen as a grossly unjust imprisonment, trial and sentence. The International Union of Muslim Scholars, the European Muslim Forum and Amnesty International have all called on the Saudi government to release Al-Ouda and his two compatriots, Sheikh Ali Al-Omari and Sheikh Awad Al-Qarni.

**Health Concerns:** Al-Ouda's son, Abdullah Al-Ouda, stated that his father had "lost almost half of his ability to hear and see" in prison. He said that due to years of abuse and isolation, his father's physical and mental condition has been declining at a greater pace.

*Arabian leopard, Saudi Arabia*



**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 31 August 1985 (age 38)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** De facto ruler of Saudi Arabia

**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

2023 (10)

2022 (15)

2021 (23)

*"All success stories start with a vision, and successful visions are based on strong pillars."*

**200** thousand  
years of human habitation in  
the kingdom

**\$500** billion  
the cost of Neom



❧ 12 ❧

*His Royal Highness*

Crown Prince Mohammed bin  
Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud



# HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

## Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia

HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al-Saud is the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, and is widely acknowledged as the de facto ruler of the kingdom.

**Rapid Appointments:** At the beginning of 2015, Prince Mohammed bin Salman was largely unknown in political and diplomatic circles. Since his father's accession to the throne in January 2015, Prince Mohammed has been swiftly appointed to a number of powerful positions. He was first appointed Minister of Defence, and also named Secretary General of the Royal Court. Then Prince Mohammed was named the chair of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs and was given control over Saudi Aramco by royal decree. In June 2017, he was appointed as Crown Prince of the Kingdom following his father's decision to remove Prince Mohammed bin Nayef from all positions. In 2022, he was appointed Prime Minister, a post traditionally held by the King.

**International Relations:** Diplomatic progress has been made with regards to Yemen, Syria and Iran. The Crown Prince has also successfully managed relations with the West despite issues surrounding the Khashoggi murder and the Ukraine war. The Saudi Arabia Public Investment Fund has spent \$6.3 billion in sports deals since early 2021, investing heavily in golf, football and sporting events. Some have levelled accusations of "sportswashing", whilst others welcome this engagement.

**Catalyst of Change:** The Crown Prince has been linked to major changes taking place in the Kingdom: allowing women to drive, holding their own passports and moving independently, the (re)opening of cinemas and holding of pop concerts, a crack-

down on corruption (including the arrest of princes and prominent businessmen), and the proposal to float Saudi Aramco, to mention a few.

**Vision 2030:** As Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman launched "Vision 2030", a comprehensive, multi-year plan for the future of Saudi Arabia. The ambitious plan seeks to revitalize the Saudi economy by bolstering the Kingdom as a global investments powerhouse, and moving away from oil-dependency as the largest source of national income.

It also seeks to strengthen government efficiency and the promotion of a "tolerant, thriving and stable Saudi Arabia that provides opportunity for all". Mega projects such as Neom, the 175-km "line city" is a statement of forging its own path.

**The Khashoggi Assassination:** Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi was a prominent journalist and Saudi Arabian dissident who was assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October 2018. Although the Saudi government denied any knowledge of the murder, they were later forced to admit that their officials had been involved but didn't go as far as the CIA who concluded that Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman had ordered Khashoggi's assassination.

**Donations:** The Crown Prince oversees regular donations to causes both home and abroad. In 2019, he donated \$1 billion to the Misk Foundation to support youth empowerment and social development in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world. In 2022 he donated \$13 million to the National Platform for Charitable Work (Ehsan) in Saudi Arabia, \$203 million to Jordan as a host of refugees and over \$500 million to support the UN Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen.

*Arabian leopard, Saudi Arabia*



**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 21 June 1961 (age 62)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** Leader of 280 million citizens and residents of Indonesia

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (13)

2022 (13)

2021 (12)

*"We need to pay special attention to capacity building, quality infrastructure, as well as accessibility and affordability of the digital economy."*

84 million

followers on social media

8

World Heritage sites



13

*His Excellency*

President Joko Widodo



# HE President Joko Widodo

## President of Indonesia

Joko Widodo, or Jokowi as he is popularly known, was re-elected President of Indonesia in the April 2019 elections, winning 55.5% of the vote, and will serve his second and final term until October 2024. Running against an opponent who questioned his Islamic credentials, President Widodo selected Ma'ruf Amin as running mate. Ma'ruf Amin is the leader of the Indonesian Ulema Council, the country's top Muslim clerical body.

**Background:** President Widodo is the first Indonesian president not to be from the military or the political elite. He comes from a humble background of Javanese descent. His father had a small furniture business, which often couldn't make ends meet. His parents struggled to put him through university, where he graduated in the field of forestry. After graduation, Widodo worked for three years in the forestry service of a state enterprise in Aceh before returning to his family business.

**Successful and "Clean" Politician:** Widodo was the mayor of Surakarta before becoming the governor of Jakarta in September 2012. As a successful mayor, he enjoyed a close relationship with his constituents. He focused on promoting the city as a centre of Javanese culture, but also developed the public transport system, healthcare and business relations with the community. He forged a reputation for being a "clean" politician, avoiding charges of corruption and nepotism which plague most politicians.

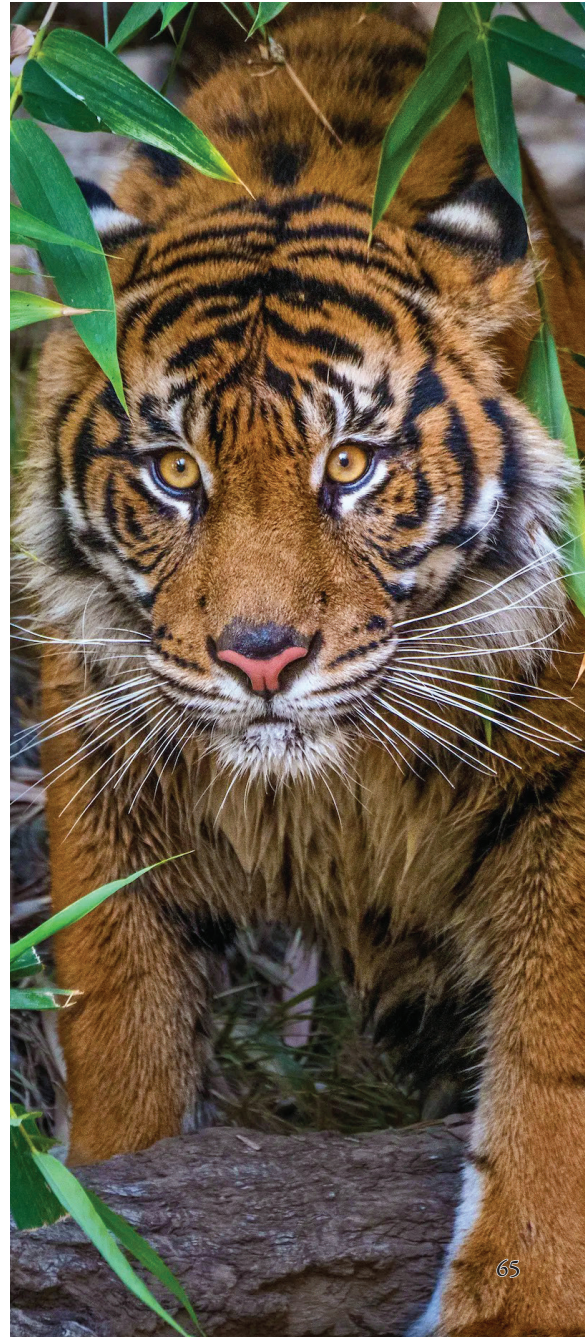
**Governor of Jakarta:** His political success continued with his election as governor of Jakarta. He was equally successful as governor, making meaningful reforms in education, public transportation, revamping traditional markets, and implementing flood control measures.

**Presidential Record:** President Joko Widodo has focused on economic development and infrastructure investment during his time in office. From 2014 to 2022, Indonesia's infrastructure investment has increased from 3% of GDP to 6% of GDP. He has also launched a number of social programs, such as the Health Insurance Card for the Poor and the Prosperous Families Program. In 2022, over 220 million Indonesians were covered by the Health Insurance Card for the Poor. President Joko Widodo has also taken steps to improve Indonesia's environmental record, such as by banning deforestation and promoting renewable energy. In 2021, Indonesia's renewable

energy capacity reached 14.6 gigawatts.

**Blusukan Culture:** President Widodo has become well-known for impromptu visits to see and hear directly from people in local communities. This has allowed him to directly address their concerns and criticisms, allowing him to develop a strong personal relationship with the public.

*Sumatran tiger, Indonesia*



**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 6 January 1946 (age 77)

**Source of Influence:** Administrative

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (14)

2022 (14)

2021 (13)

*“The tolerant teachings of Islam honored man, preserved women’s rights, criminalized extremism and racism, and established the values of mutual respect and coexistence among all human beings.”*

2 million

Al-Azhar students in Egypt

970<sub>CE</sub>

the year Al-Azhar University was founded.



۞ 14 ۞

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb



# HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb

## Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar University, Grand Imam of 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 Al-Azhar for seven years and, prior to that, served for two years as the most powerful cleric in Egypt as its Grand Mufti.

**Leader of 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 centre 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 centre of Sunni Muslim scholarship worldwide.

**Administers Al-Azhar Education Network:** Al-Azhar is 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, with 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. The graduates of Al-Azhar have great respect as religious leaders within the Muslim community, and this makes the head of Al-Azhar an extraordinarily powerful and influential person.

**Scholarly Influence:** 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. This influence is disseminated popularly through his online presence, with over 20 million followers on social media.

**Advocate of Traditional Islam:** Sheikh Al-Tayyeb has emphasized 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. In an age where claimants to authoritative Islam seem to be on every

corner, Sheikh Al-Tayyeb has both the institute and the personal skills to authentically claim to be a representative of traditional Islam—Islam as practiced by the majority of Muslims throughout the ages. Sheikh Al-Tayyeb has defined the Sunni community (Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Al-Jama'ah) as those who follow Imam Abul-Hasan Al-Ash'ari and Imam Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi and the scholars of Hanafi, Maliki, and Shafi'i jurisprudence, as well as the moderate scholars of the Hanbali school. He also included the Sufis following the way of Imam Al-Junayd.

**Political Stance:** Over the past years of political uncertainty and unrest in Egypt, Al-Tayyeb has attempted to hold the middle way. He has been outspoken against the Muslim Brotherhood for their exploitation of Islam as a political ideology whilst also resisting calls by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi for a “religious revolution” and efforts to “renew Islamic discourse”. Such efforts included the suggestion to revoke the verbal divorce law in Egypt. Al-Azhar wholly rejected the President’s plan, calling the law an “undisputed practice since the days of the Prophet Muhammad”. Al-Tayyeb has been active in trying to diffuse the influence of DA’ISH, organizing many initiatives and conferences. He has also tried to improve foreign relations and met with many foreign religious leaders and heads of states (including the Pope and the late Queen Elizabeth).

**Interfaith Initiative:** The International Day of Human Fraternity is an annual UN-designated celebration of interfaith and multicultural understanding which was established by Pope Francis and Sheikh Al-Tayyeb in 2020. He subsequently visited the Vatican in 2022.

*Arabian leopard, Egypt*



**Country:** Palestine

**Born:** 29 January 1962 (age 61)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** Head of Hamas Political Bureau

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (Hon Men)

2022 (Hon Men)

2021 (Hon Men)

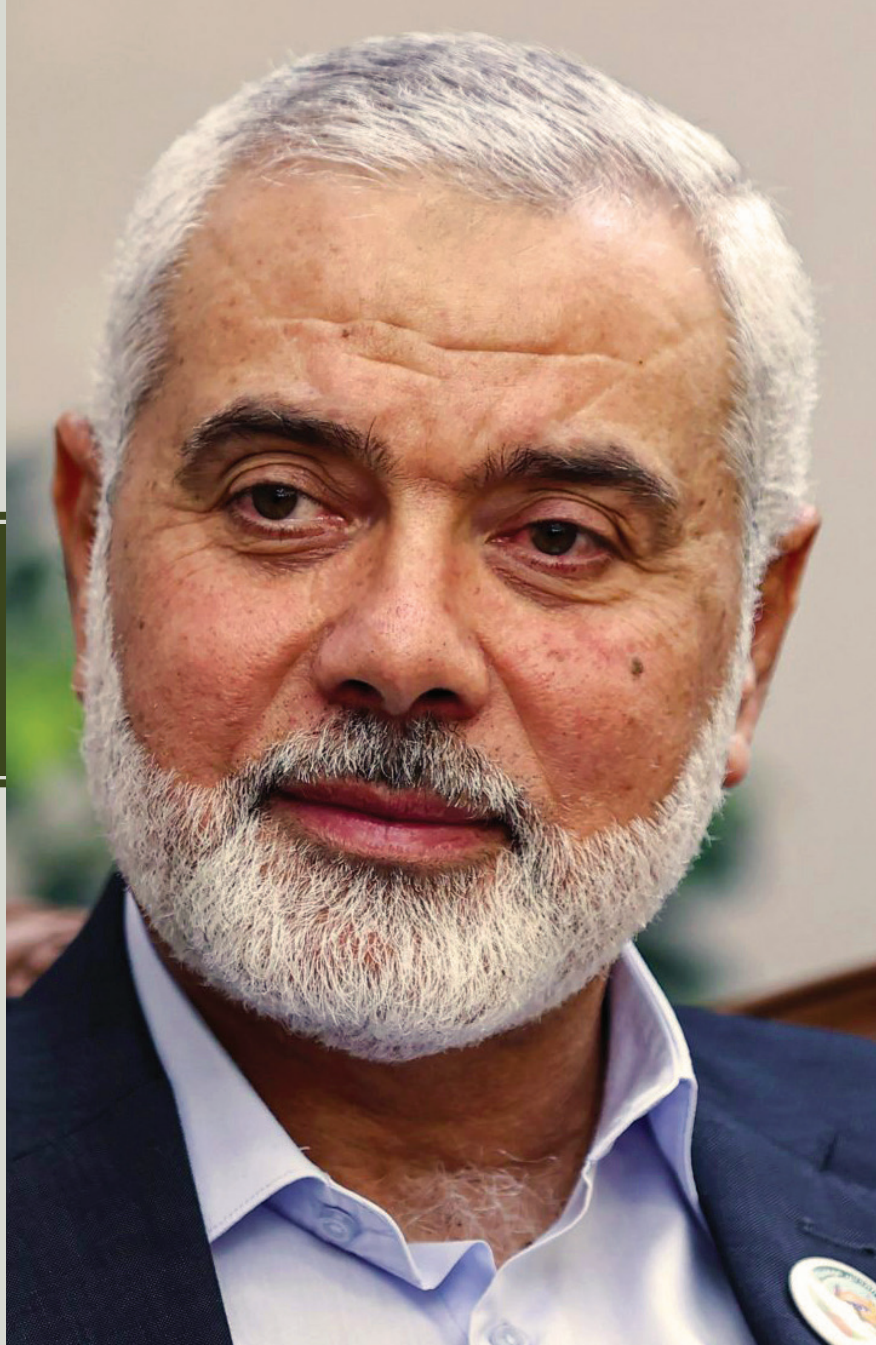
*"The underlying problem remains the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and the continuing Israeli assaults against our people."*

90%

water in Gaza is unpotable

81.5%

poverty rate in Gaza



❧ 15 ❧

*His Excellency*  
Ismail Haniyeh



# HE Ismail Haniyeh

## Head of Hamas Political Bureau

Haniyeh was elected as Head of Hamas Political Bureau in May 2017 succeeding Khaled Mashal, who completed his two terms in office. Haniyeh has been a senior political leader of Hamas for over 20 years and served as one of two disputed prime ministers of the Palestinian National Authority. The resistance shown by Hamas in launching the October 7 attacks have made him one of the most popular politicians in the Islamic world.

**Background:** Ismail Haniyeh, born in 1962 in the Al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza, is a prominent Palestinian political leader and a key figure in the Hamas movement. He graduated from the Islamic University of Gaza with a degree in Arabic literature and went on to become a teacher. Haniyeh's political career took off when he joined Hamas in the late 1980s. Over the years, he rose through the ranks and eventually became the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority in 2006. His leadership and influence have been instrumental in shaping the Palestinian resistance movement.

**Hamas:** Hamas, (the Islamic Resistance Movement), was founded in 1987 during the First Intifada (Palestinian uprising) against Israeli occupation. The organization's main objectives are the liberation of Palestinian territories, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and resistance against Israel. Hamas has a social service wing, Dawah, and a military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades providing social services and engaging in armed struggle simultaneously. This dual approach has allowed Hamas to gain grassroots support among Palestinians.

**Gaza:** Gaza, a densely populated strip of land along the Mediterranean Sea, faces extreme poverty and overcrowding. Housing over 2 million people in a mere 365 square kilometres, Gaza ranks among the most densely populated areas globally. More than half of its population lives below the poverty line, with access to basic necessities like clean water, electricity, and healthcare severely limited. The dire conditions, in Gaza, enforced through Israeli blockades and restrictions, have exacerbated the Palestinian plight, fuelling frustration and anger.

**Israeli Attacks Since 2008:** Although Israel withdrew its army from Gaza in 2005, it has continued its military offensives over the years often in direct response to Hamas firing rockets into Israel. Notable

conflicts include Operation Cast Lead in 2008-2009, which included the war crime of repeatedly firing white phosphorus shells over densely populated areas; Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012, and Operation Protective Edge in 2014. These military operations resulted in 6,500 Palestinian deaths and over 150,000 injured and 308 Israeli deaths and 6,000 injured. There has also been widespread destruction of infrastructure resulting in a further deterioration of living conditions in the already impoverished territory. The international community has repeatedly expressed concerns about the disproportionate use of force and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

**7 October 2023 Hamas Attack:** With relentless restrictions, provocations and attacks increasing in Gaza, the West Bank and especially around the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Hamas launched a series of rocket attacks into southern Israel which served as cover for an unprecedented multi-pronged infiltration of fighters who crossed the border and penetrated at least three military installations as well as the settlements of Sderot, Be'eri, and Ofakim. Up to 300 Israelis were killed and some taken hostage. In response, the Israeli government declared that it was at war, initiating devastating airstrikes on Gaza while preparing for a full ground invasion.

**Resistance:** On the day that Al-Aqsa Typhoon was launched, Haniyeh delivered a speech reaffirming Hamas' commitment to the Palestinian cause and their determination to resist occupation. He emphasised the importance of unity among Palestinians and called for international support in their struggle for self-determination. Haniyeh said that Israeli violations against Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi were red lines; that even if the whole world stood silent to it, the resistance would not. Haniyeh condemned Israel's assassination of sheikhs and scholars and said that Hamas had confirmed intelligence that the occupation intends to impose its complete sovereignty over Al-Aqsa Mosque and therefore this was a call to the whole Ummah to jihad. Haniyeh also said that normalization will not end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**Country:** India

**Born:** 3 March 1964 (age 60)

**Influence:** Scholarly, Political, Administrative. 12 million members of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (15)

2022 (27)

2021 (27)



*"Hate can't be solved by hate."*

**12**million  
Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind  
followers

**1919**  
the year Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind  
was established

❧ 16 ❧

*His Excellency*

Maulana Mahmood Madani

# Maulana Mahmood Madani

## President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind

Maulana Mahmood Madani is the President of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (JUH), having served as secretary-general for 13 years. He has gained influence for his forthright condemnations of terrorism and unfaltering support of the Indian Muslim community.

**Lineage:** Maulana Mahmood's grandfather Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmad Madani was a great scholar of Islamic theology, teaching hadith in Madinah, and Deoband. He was the president of the JUH until his death in 1957 and was then succeeded by his son Asad Madani (the father of Maulana Mahmood), who was president until his death in 2006.

**Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (JUH):** JUH was established in 1919 by leading Deoband scholars who argued for the concept of composite nationalism, believing that a nation should not be formed on the basis of one factor only (e. g. religion, ethnicity etc), but rather be based on many factors. Maulana Mahmood has striven to keep this concept alive amid all the turmoil of nationalistic politics in India. After graduating from Deoband in 1992, he became actively involved in the JUH, organizing conferences and meetings across the country which saw a rapid rise in membership. He became the General Secretary of JUH in 2001 and continued to invigorate the organization. When his father passed away in 2006, a dispute arose between him and his uncle around the leadership of the organization leading to a bifurcation.

**Activism:** He has advocated for Muslim rights in India and 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 mobilized Darul Uloom Deoband institutions to host events condemning terrorism as inherently un-Islamic. This had a major impact on the community. He has been at the forefront of relief work (earthquakes in Gujrat and Kashmir), health and social development (Kashmir).

**Legal battles:** Maulana Madani leads numerous legal battles in various courts of the country fighting to secure the rights of Indian Muslims in cases covering Right to Citizenship, Right to Practice Religious Duties, as well as defending those Muslims who have been falsely implicated in terror cases.

**Combating Islamophobia:** With RSS ideology growing ever menacingly, Maulana Mahmood Madani has supported a number of initiatives to counter the impact of hatred and religious-based crime against Indian Muslims. The JEIM (Justice and Empowerment Initiative for Indian Muslims) records cases of Islamophobia in a systematic manner and provides advocacy and other forms of assistance to the victims. This is the first such attempt by Indian Muslims to record such cases and present them to human rights organizations.

*Bengal tiger, India*





**Country:** Malaysia  
**Born:** August 10, 1947 (age 76 years)  
**Source of Influence:** Prime Minister of Malaysia  
**Influence:** Political  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni  
2023 (Hon Men)  
2022 (Hon Men)  
2021: (Hon Men)

*"We want our country to be a Madani nation that will uphold the dignity of all citizens"*

20<sup>th</sup>

Prime Minister of Malaysia

1 million

copies of the Qur'an distributed worldwide



﴿ 17 ﴾

*His Excellency*  
Anwar Ibrahim

# HE Anwar Ibrahim

## Prime Minister of Malaysia

HE Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim assumed office as Malaysia's 10th Prime Minister in November 2022, leading the Pakatan Harapan (Alliance of Hope) coalition. This marked the culmination of a political journey that spanned three decades, during which he faced imprisonment, exile, and political challenges before returning to the helm of government.

**Beginnings:** Anwar's early life was rooted in Penang, Malaysia, where he was born to a Muslim Malay family. His parents' involvement in politics exposed him to the field at a young age. His political journey began during his years as a student at the University of Malaya in the late 1960s, where he gained recognition for his leadership qualities. In 1971, he founded and became the president of the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia.

**Political Success:** Anwar's political career took off in 1982 when he accepted an invitation from then-Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamed to join the United Malays National Organization (UMNO). He quickly rose through the ranks, holding various ministerial positions, including Minister of Youth, Culture, and Sports (1983), Minister of Agriculture (1984), Minister of Education (1986-1991), and Minister of Finance (1991-1998). He also served as Deputy Prime Minister from 1993 to 1998.

**Trials and tribulations:** In a seesaw trajectory that has marked his political life, he was a leader of Malaysia's economic success during the 90s but came to heads with Mahathir during the financial crisis

of 1997 and was dismissed in 1998. In 1999 he was jailed for corruption and later on for charges of sodomy. This conviction was later overturned in 2004 through lack of reliable evidence and he was released, but he was again convicted, imprisoned and freed over the next two decades, including a period as Leader of the Opposition from 2008-2015. A literary man, he said he spent much time in prison reading Shakespeare, and read the complete works four times, and survived, he said, with the help of such reading and singing songs.

**Royal Pardon:** Anwar was finally released through Royal Pardon in 2018, a "travesty of justice" being cited as the reason. He almost immediately returned to Parliament and won a by-election by a huge majority, and again was Leader of the Opposition from 2018-2022. He now heads the Pakatan Harapan coalition and is also President of the Peoples Justice Party.

**Academic life:** Beyond his political career, Anwar has made contributions to academia, holding positions at institutions such as St. Anthony's College, Oxford, Johns Hopkins University, and Georgetown University. He is also a co-founder of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), established in the United States in 1981. Furthermore, he served as the Chancellor of the International Islamic University Kuala Lumpur from 1983 to 1988 and has received honorary degrees from institutions in Indonesia and the Philippines.

*Asian Golden cat, Malaysia*





**Country:** Nigeria  
**Born:** 24 August 1956 (age 67)  
**Source of Influence:** Lineage, Development, Administrative  
**Influence:** Central figure for 107 million Nigerian Muslims  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Maliki; linked to the Qadiriyyah Sufi order by lineage  
2023 (18)  
2022 (18)  
2021 (19)

*“The crown of a leader is his integrity, his stronghold is his impartiality, and his wealth is the welfare of his people.”*

3 years  
served as Defence Attaché to Pakistan

54%  
Nigerians are Muslim



❧ 18 ❧

*His Royal Eminence*

Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan  
Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III



# HRE 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 the head of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria (SCIAN), which is the umbrella body for all Muslim organizations in the country and is considered the spiritual leader of Nigeria's 108 million Muslims, who account for roughly 50% 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.

**Military Man:** Sa'adu Abubakar succeeded his brother, Muhammadu Maccido, who died in a plane crash in 2006. Prior to this he had served in the military, including commanding African peacekeepers in Chad. He retired as Brigadier General and was serving as Defense Attache to Pakistan when he became Sultan.

**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 19th 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 50 years. The rule of Abubakar's father from 1938 to 1988 earned the position with 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 Sultan of Sokoto is also the Chancellor of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, one of the largest universities in Nigeria, with over 40,000 students.

**Interfaith Initiative:** The Sultan has started many initiatives to counter and reduce the influence of Boko Haram. He has also worked to strengthen Muslim-Christian ties by inviting an international joint Muslim-Christian Delegation to visit Nigeria. In 2019, he was appointed as Co-Moderator of the Council of Religion for Peace (CRP).

*Lion, Nigeria*



**Country:** Mauritania  
**Born:** 1935 (age 88)  
**Source of Influence:** Scholarly  
**Influence:** Significant influence as a leading contemporary scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Maliki)  
2023 (16)  
2022 (16)  
2021 (14)

*“Every hope for a better future, if not built upon work occurring in the present, is not truly hope; rather, it is delusion.”*

13

positions in fiqh organizations worldwide

700

Muslim scholars who attended the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies



﴿ 19 ﴾

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah



# HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah

## President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies

Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah's influence is derived from his scholarship, piety 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 fatwahs as authoritative. He is an instructor at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah and was the deputy head of the Union of Muslim Scholars, having previously been a Judge at the High Court of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Head of Sharia Affairs at the Ministry of Justice. He was appointed chair of the UAE Fatwa Council.

**Education:** Sheikh bin Bayyah was raised in a household famous for its scholars, and his father, Sheikh Mahfoudh bin Bayyah, was the head of the Conference of Mauritanian Scholars established after the country's independence. Sheikh bin Bayyah studied in the Mauritanian centres of learning known as *mahadhir*, in which all the sacred sciences were taught including: jurisprudence, legal theory, syntax, language, rhetoric, Qur'anic exegesis and its auxiliary sciences, and the science of Prophetic tradition.

**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-aqaliyyat*.

**Activist:** In June 2013, Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah visited the White House where he met with senior advisers and aides to the then-President Obama. He called for the protection of the Syrian people and the Muslim minority in Myanmar. Also, he met with Bill Gates during the Global Vaccine Summit in Abu Dhabi in April 2013. He initiated the Muslim Council of Elders which embraces leading scholars (including the Sheikh of Al-Azhar), and presided over a large gathering of religious scholars at a forum entitled "Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies", which has now been established as an organi-

zation (based in the UAE). He has been criticized for accepting support from the UAE, which is currently involved in several regional conflicts.

**The Marrakesh Declaration:** Sheikh Abdallah bin Bayyah led around 250 Muslim religious leaders, in addition to approximately 50 non-Muslim religious leaders, in a three-day summit in Marrakesh entitled: "The Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities: Legal Framework and a Call to Action". The summit used the original Charter of Medina, drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself, as a basis for addressing the current crisis of religious minorities in parts of the Muslim world. With extremists committing violence in the name of Islam against other religions, as well as against most Muslims, it was necessary to voice the position of normative Islam vis-à-vis religious minorities through a gathering of its leading scholars. The summit concluded with the release of the 750-word *Marrakesh Declaration* (see page 124).

*Lioness, Mauritania*





**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 16 February 1966 (age 57)

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

**Influence:** Leader of approximately 50 million members of the Nahdlatul Ulama

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (19)

2022 (450)

2021 (450)

*"We need to find a new, moral, interpretation of religion that will guide people of different faiths to have more harmonious relations with one another."*

**95** million  
members of Nahdlatul Ulama

**1926**<sub>CE</sub>  
the year Nahdlatul Ulama was founded.



❧ 20 ❧

*Sheikh*

**Yahya Cholil Staquf**

# Yahya Cholil Staquf

## General Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama

Yahya Cholil Staquf serves as General Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama ((NU), or “Awakening of Scholars”) Central Board. As the world’s largest Muslim organisation—with over 90 million members and 21,000 madrasahs—the Nahdlatul Ulama adheres to the traditions of Sunni Islam, and teaches that the primary message of Islam is universal love and compassion.

**Personal Education:** Mr Staquf is descended from a long and illustrious line of Javanese ulema and was educated from earliest childhood in the formal and spiritual sciences of Islam. Mr Staquf later became a disciple of venerated Islamic scholar and head of the NU Supreme Council, KH Ali Maksum (1915–1989), and of long-time NU Chairman and Indonesia’s first democratically elected head of state, KH Abdurrahman Wahid (1940 – 2009).

**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 *Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Al-Jama’ah*, meaning “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

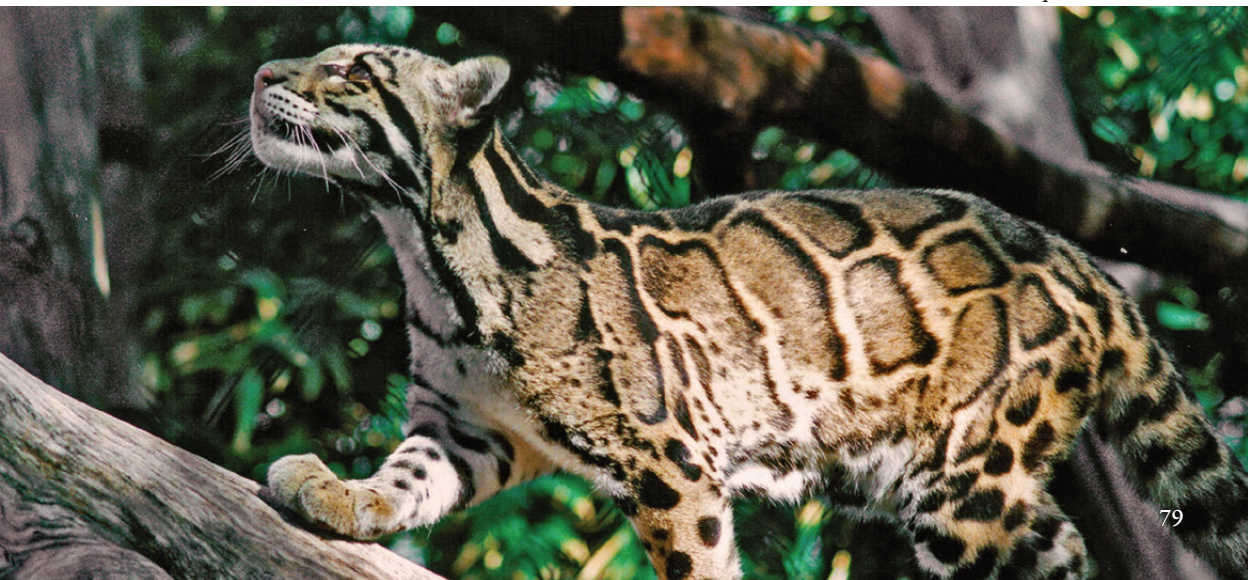
structure of central and regional boards, branch and special branch boards, and various advisory councils, Staquf sits at the top of this influential Sunni movement.

**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, healthcare, and poverty alleviation. Staquf, 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.

**Advisor:** Staquf also served on HE President Joko Widodo’s Presidential Advisory Council, where he advised the President on religious, domestic and international affairs. Staquf co-founded the US-based organization Bayt ar-Rahmah li ad-Da’wa al-Islamiyah Rahmatan li al-‘Alamin (The Home of Divine Grace for Revealing and Nurturing Islam as a Blessing for All Creation), and the Center for Shared Civilizational Values in 2021, both to serve as hubs for the expansion of Nahdlatul Ulama operations in North America, Europe and the Middle East.

*Sunda clouded leopard, Indonesia*





**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 19 November 1954 (age 69 years)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** President of Egypt

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2023 (40)

2022 (450 lists)

2021: (450 lists)

*"I would never stay in office against the will of the people. My ethics and patriotism do not allow me to do so."*

**6.7** million tonnes  
maximum capacity of Port Said

**113** million  
population of Egypt



❧ 21 ❧

*His Excellency*

President Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi



# HE President Abdel Fattah Saeed El-Sisi

## President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Former Field Marshal Abdel Fattah Saeed El-Sisi was sworn into office as the 6th President of Egypt on 8 June 2014, having earlier that year resigned from his post as the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces. As a civilian, and as Deputy Prime Minister, Sisi won the presidential elections held in May 2014.

**Post Arab-Spring:** Former Field Marshal Abdel Fattah Saeed El-Sisi removed Egypt's first democratically elected president (Mohamed Morsi (d. 2019)) from power in 2013 in response to massive street protests against the Muslim Brotherhood-led government. Outbreaks of violence ensued across Egypt that included the death of many hundreds of protesters at the hands of pro-military police at the Raba'a Al-Adawiya Square in Cairo. Sisi then ran for office himself and was sworn into office as President of Egypt on 8 June 2014, having earlier that year resigned from his post as the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces.

**President:** Sisi was re-elected in 2018 with 97% of the vote for a second and final term. However, in 2019 the Presidential terms were extended to six years, and Sisi will likely run in, and win, the presidential elections that will be held from December 10-12, 2023. Originally planned for 2024, the presidential elections have been moved forward due to the country's deepening political and economic crisis. More candidates are expected to run in these elections, but the situation is beginning to look more like the pre-Arab Spring autocratic rule of Hosni Mubarak.

**Expectations:** With the MB officially banned, its leadership and cadre either in prison or in exile, Egyptians looked to Sisi to resolve complex domestic and international issues. Sisi inherited a politically and economically battered Egypt with a weak infrastructure, bread and fuel shortages, and violent insurgency and unrest in Sinai. All of these have been resolved, say supporters of the President. Also, under Sisi, Egypt has enjoyed excellent relations with members of the Arab League, most notably with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Sisi supported the blockade on Qatar as well as the GCC-led military intervention in Yemen. Regarding Africa, Sisi is prepared to mediate between warring parties in Sudan to reach a truce, and he will lead multinational peace talks related to Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam, a project that threatens the Nile's flow to Sudan and Egypt.

**Challenges:** With inflation running at 37%, the currency devalued (1 US dollar is 30 Egyptian pounds compared to 7 pounds when Sisi first came to power) and a huge international debt, economic hardship has been felt by most of the population. Human rights organizations estimate that the number of political prisoners in Egypt ranges between 65,000 to 70,000.

**Mega Projects:** The country's economic hardships have not stopped several mega-projects, including the New Administrative Capital, which is in its first phase and has cost over \$45 billion, a new "summer capital" on the north coast, a nuclear power plant, and a sustainable city in the Nile delta, amongst others.

*Egyptian Mau, Egypt*



**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 3 March 1953 (age 70)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Political

**Influence:** Leading Religious voice in Egypt

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (20)

2022 (20)

2021 (17)

*"Terrorism cannot be born of religion. Terrorism is the product of corrupt minds, hardened hearts, and arrogant egos, and corruption, destruction, and arrogance are unknown to the heart attached to the divine."*

50

books written

Over

91

million

views on his YouTube



❧ 22 ❧

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa



# HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa

## Former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Sheikh Ali Gomaa is the former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt. He is one of the foremost Islamic scholars in the world. Despite retiring from the post of Grand Mufti of Egypt in 2013, Gomaa has remained active on many fronts and his counsel is more in demand than ever before.

**Egypt's Weight in Islamic Scholarship:** Gomaa's scholarly influence is derived from his position at the centre of many of the most significant institutions of Islamic law in the world. Before becoming Grand Mufti, Gomaa was a Professor of jurisprudence at Al-Azhar University—the second oldest university in the world, founded in 975 CE. Gomaa 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. Gomaa has authored over 50 books, as well as hundreds of articles. However, in July 2021 the secretariat of the International Union of Muslim Scholars dismissed him, along with Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah and Farouk Hamadeh, from the organization, ostensibly for controversial *fiqh* (jurisprudence) opinions.

**Visit to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Controversy:** On 18 April 2012, Sheikh Ali Gomaa, with HRH Prince Ghazi of Jordan, broke what had been a 45-year taboo in some parts of the Islamic World and visited Al-Aqsa Mosque in order to pray there and support the beleaguered Muslim community in Jeru-

salem. 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:** Gomaa was exceedingly popular as a mufti and remains ever-popular since his retirement, although some of his political statements and pro-military government stance after the Egyptian Revolution have tempered this support somewhat. Apart from appearing on popular broadcasts and satellite television programmes, he also revived the practice of informal “knowledge circles” at the Al-Azhar Mosque. At his very well-attended Q&A sessions after his Friday sermons, Gomaa 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 vehemently oppose political Islam as well as also making him a target for some extremist Islamists.

**Popularized and Simplified Fatwahs:** Gomaa has immense legal influence through his advocacy of Islamic religious edicts (fatwahs). When he was Grand Mufti of Egypt, he modernized the process of issuing fatwahs in the country. He did this by overhauling the Dar Al-Ifta organization into a dynamic institution with worldwide reach, based on a fatwah council and a system of checks and balances.

*Arabian leopard, Egypt*





**Country:** Yemen

**Born:** 16 April 1971 (age 52)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage, Philanthropy

**Influence:** Preacher, Social Issues

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (22)

2022 (22)

2021 (21)

*"Your being on the lookout for the vices hidden within you is better than your being on the lookout for the invisible realities veiled from you."*

2005<sub>CE</sub>

the year the Tabah Foundation was founded

36

number of countries he has lectured in



23

Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri

# Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al-Abideen Al-Jifri

## Director General of Tabah Foundation, UAE

Tracing his lineage to the family of Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam and cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Habib Ali Zain Al-Abideen Al-Jifri is a leading Islamic scholar and prominent speaker in the Muslim world. Al-Jifri is Director General of Tabah Foundation in the UAE, 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.

**Beginnings:** Habib Ali was born in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to a family with ancestral roots in Yemen. From his early childhood he was nurtured in the Islamic sciences by distinguished teachers, starting with his mother's great aunt, Safiyya bint Hasan Al-Jifri, a scholar of the Islamic sciences and spiritual educator.

**Ba Alawi School:** Al-Jifri is part of a tradition that has been based in Yemen for over 1,000 years. His numerous teachers include the late scholars and spiritual masters Habib Abdul-Qadir bin Ahmad Al-Saqqaf and Habib Ahmad Mashhur bin Taha Al-Haddad as well as the current leader of the Ba Alawi, Sheikh Habib Umar. Habib Ali often teaches at Dar al-Mustafa in Tarim, Yemen, and also travels

all over the world meeting his students and giving lectures. Al-Jifri's counselling is also in demand, and his spiritual insights have left a huge impression on many. His guidance is based on incorporating as much of the sunnah into one's daily life as one can.

**Think Tank:** Al-Jifri founded the privately funded philanthropic Tabah Foundation for Islamic Studies and Research in Abu Dhabi, a non-Professorit institution that is a source of reputable work in Islamic research and thought. It applies traditional religious principles to analyze contemporary issues. Some of these have inevitably become controversial such as when he made statements against popular revolutions during the Arab Spring for his belief that the preservation of peace and reducing bloodshed is paramount.

**Worldwide Following:** Habib Ali's popularity has grown enormously over the past few years with almost 15 million followers on different social media platforms. His inspirational speeches often leave many in tears, and his smile and gentleness touch all who meet him. He is constantly in demand and visits people from all socioeconomic levels, travelling the globe regularly. Despite not speaking English, he is in huge demand by English-speaking Muslims.

*Arabian Mau, UAE*





**Country:** Türkiye

**Born:** 15 September 1971 (age 52 years)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** Head of Turkish Intelligence

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2023 (450 lists)

2022 (450 lists)

2021 (450 lists)

*"No matter how big, tall and crowded things are, the sun always rises over them. Follow the sun. Witness the sun. Be the sun."*

9

years

adviser to President Erdoğan

4

million

followers on social media



ۛ 24 ۛ

Dr Ibrahim Kalin



# Dr Ibrahim Kalin

## Director of the Turkish National Intelligence Organization

Dr Kalin is a scholar and intellectual who has been a long-term confidant of President Erdoğan, previously holding the posts of Senior Advisor to the President and Presidential Spokesperson. He was appointed head of the Turkish National Intelligence Agency (MIT) in June 2023.

**Scholar:** After completing his initial university studies in his birth town, Istanbul, Kalin earned an MA from the International Islamic University of Malaysia and undertook his PhD from George Washington University under the supervision of Islamic philosopher Seyyed Hossein Nasr. His dissertation was later published by the OUP entitled: *Knowledge in Later Islamic Philosophy: Mullā Şadrā on Existence, Intellect, and Intuition*. Dr Kalin has published widely on Islamic philosophy, relations between Islam and the West, and Turkish foreign policy.

**Academic:** From 2002 to 2005 he was a faculty member at the Department of Religious Studies at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts before founding and being director of the SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research based in Ankara, Turkey (2005–2009). He also served as a Fellow at Georgetown University.

**Political Confidant:** Kalin was introduced to government in 2009 by Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who is also an academic. Despite Davutoglu falling out with President Erdoğan, Kalin not only

stayed, but ended up becoming an even more key figure. He has become a long-term confidant of Erdoğan and served as Presidential Spokesperson and Senior Adviser to the President from 2014. Kalin has taken the lead on several diplomatic efforts in recent years, showing his skills in negotiating complex issues during the Syrian conflict with major powers such as Russia, the US, and Iran to establish ceasefire agreements and initiate peace talks. He has also been heavily involved in Türkiye's relationship with the European Union (EU).

**Head of The National Intelligence Agency (MIT):** Kalin's appointment was met with surprise in certain quarters due to his lack of a military background. However, others view his unique experiences and intellectual proficiency across various fields as a seamless fit for meeting the growing demands of modern intelligence agencies, characterized by heightened complexity and multidisciplinary challenges. Since his appointment in June 2023 he hasn't posted publicly to his substantial 3 million social media followers.

**Musician:** His passion for folk music has propelled him into becoming a proficient bağlama player, mastering the intricacies of this long-necked lute traditionally employed in Ottoman classical music. His performances on YouTube, both playing the instrument and singing, have garnered millions of views.

*Van Cat, Türkiye*



**Country:** United States  
**Born:** 1 January 1960 (age 63)  
**Source of Influence:** Preacher, Social Issues  
**Influence:** Scholarly, leading Islamic voice for English-speaking Muslims  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni  
2023 (23)  
2022 (23)  
2021 (22)

*“Everybody wants to change the world, yet no one wants to change themselves.”*

17  
age when he converted to Islam

2008<sub>CE</sub>  
is the year he co-founded Zaytuna College



25

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson



# Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson

## Teacher and Co-Founder of Zaytuna College

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson is one of the most influential Islamic figures in the Western world. He is seen as one of the foremost authorities on Islam outside of the Muslim world. He is co-founder and current President of Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, the first and only accredited 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. He spent most of his time in the UAE and then Mauritania, where he met and lived with one of his closest teachers, Sheikh Murabit Al-Hajj (d. 2018). He returned to the USA in 1987 and studied nursing before transitioning to a full-time imam at the Santa Clara Mosque.

**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 has spread 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 has been the inspiration for a whole generation of English-speaking

Muslims to study Arabic and Islamic sciences. He has taught and inspired many of them to become teachers in their own right, and more importantly help forge a confident and faithful Islamic identity in the troubling times of the 21st century.

**Advisor:** He advises on Islamic Studies to several US universities, and is also on the board of advisors of George Russell's One Nation, a national philanthropic initiative that promotes pluralism and inclusion in America. He works closely with Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah and serves as vice-president for two organizations the Sheikh is president of: the Global Center for Guidance and Renewal, and the UAE-based Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies. He has also been called on to advise the US government and this has opened him up to attacks from certain quarters of the Muslim community.

**Controversies:** Despite being in the public eye for over three decades, Sheikh Hamza has managed to stay clear of most controversies and continues to reach a large, diverse audience. Some personal attacks have questioned his advice to a US president or his ties to the UAE government, yet he remains one of the most beloved scholars in the world, and arguably the most intellectually widely read and formidable Western Muslim scholar in the world.

*Cougar, California*







**Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse**  
 Spiritual leader, lineage  
**Country:** Senegal  
**Born:** 1955 (age 68)  
**Influence:** Spiritual leader of Tijani Muslims  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

26

Rank (2023): 24  
 Rank (2021): 24  
 Rank (2020): 24

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin 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.

**Leader of Tijani Muslims:** Cisse became leader of the Tijaniyya following the death of his elder brother Sheikh 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.

**Education and Activities:** Sheikh Tijani Cisse (b. 1955) studied Qur'an, Arabic and classical texts with both his father, Sheikh Ali Cisse, and his legendary grandfather, Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse. He then continued his studies at Al-Azhar University in Egypt, studying Arabic and Usul Al-Din (theology). He has edited and published several important works, including Sheikh Ibrahim's *Kashif Al-Ilbas*.

**Posts:** In 2001, Sheikh 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* ("flood" or "overflow of spiritual grace"), giving him authority to carry on the teachings of Ahmad Al-Tijani Hasani. The Tijanis are characterized by strict following of the sunnah, recitation of spiritual litanies (*awrad*) individually and in gatherings and an emphasis on developing an inward relationship with God.



**Sheikh Mustafa Hosny**  
 Televangelist  
**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 28 August 1978 (age 45)  
**Influence:** Preacher  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

27

Rank (2023): 26  
 Rank (2021): 28  
 Rank (2020): 28

Mustafa Hosny is a televangelist and Islamic preacher who presented his first show in 2004 and has gone on to become a household name.

**Changing Careers:** Mustafa Hosny started his career in sales and changed careers to become a full-time preacher after receiving a certification from the Institute of Training Preachers, an affiliate of the Awqaf Ministry (Egypt).

**Preacher:** Mustafa Hosny delivers sermons and lectures worldwide and currently presents more than 13 programmes on TV and radio. He also delivers weekly sermons and lectures at Yousef El-Sahaby and El-Hosary mosques and Friday sermons at Al-Bilal Mosque compound in Cairo. In 2023 Sheikh Mustafa launched a series of episodes on the biography of the Prophet Muhammad entitled 'Noor: A Journey Through the Life of the Messenger of God'. The series translates the classical sources of the Seerah and makes them accessible to contemporary Muslims, particularly the young.

**Humanitarian:** Some of his activities include combating drug addiction amongst youth. He is a supporting member for the Children's Cancer Hospital campaign in Cairo and delivers seminars and campaigns for the Life Clear of Smoking Association in Egypt. He also supports blood donation campaigns.

**Social Media:** He has nearly 71 million followers on different social media platforms including 6.8 million subscribers on YouTube alone where his videos have over 680 million views. He has weekly live broadcasts on social media where he tries to make classical Islamic texts accessible to his viewers. He also devotes a portion of his broadcasts to questions and answers where he answers things from the proper way to pray to questions about personal problems and challenges. His softly spoken style has greatly endeared him to the public.

Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah  
Secretary-General of Hezbollah  
**Country:** Lebanon  
**Born:** 30 August 1960 (age 63)  
**Influence:** Political, Development  
**School of Thought:** Shia



Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn  
Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh  
Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of  
Saudi Arabia  
**Country:** Saudi Arabia  
**Born:** 30 November 1943 (age 80)  
**Influence:** Grand Mufti of Saudi  
Arabia and of Salafis worldwide  
**School of Thought:** Salafi



Rank (2023): 21  
Rank (2022): 21  
Rank (2021): 20

28



Rank (2023): 27  
Rank (2022): 26  
Rank (2021): 26

29



Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah is serving his sixth term as the current and third Secretary-General of Hezbollah (the Party of God). Hezbollah is a Twelver Shia Islamic political party, social and paramilitary organization based in Lebanon which seeks social justice through Islamic ideals.

**Military Power:** Hezbollah remains a de facto security force in southern Lebanon, and its military presence is felt throughout the country. The military successes Nasrallah had in the late 90s are seen as the main factor for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000; and the repulsion of Israeli forces in July 2006 earned Nasrallah many more supporters. Hezbollah fighters have been key in strengthening the Syrian regime during the Syrian civil war, and their presence there has pushed out DA'ISH but draws reactions from Israel.

**Social Services:** Hezbollah has also won significant grassroots support by cultivating a social welfare system that provides schools, clinics and housing in the predominantly Shia parts of Lebanon. These welfare activities are run with efficiency and rival those carried out by the state. It also runs Al Manar—an influential television station.

**Popularity:** His popularity peaked just after the 2006 conflict with Israel, when many Sunni Muslims looked to him as a figure of defiance against Israel. Since the Syrian conflict, however, many if not all of these supporters have left him because of his support of the Syrian (Alawi) regime against the Syrian people, the majority of whom are Sunnis.

**Current Issues:** Nasrallah has been very critical of recent peace initiatives with Israel. The aftermath of the huge blast in Beirut in August 2020 has led to a crippling political and economic situation and its repercussions are still being felt.

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 Makkah 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 Abdul Wahhab (1703–1792), the founder of Wahhabi 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 scientific consultative commission composed of leading Sunni specialist scholars of shariah (Islamic law). He is recognized for his influence in enforcing a distinct view of Islamic tradition. He has publicly criticized Muslim televangelists who encourage Muslims to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. He has also been robust in his condemnation of Turkish soap operas sweeping the Arab World, calling them distracting practices.

**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 past interpretations that have become a part of Muslims' lives. The movement he leads is characterized by an authoritative stance on Islamic religious practice. He has described DA'ISH as "evil" and called them "the number one enemy of Islam". In 2017, he received praise from an Israeli minister for labelling Hamas a terrorist organization.



**Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari**  
 Scholar  
**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 16 July 1976 (age 47)  
**Influence:** Scholarly  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni



**HE President Ilham Aliyev**  
 Politician  
**Country:** Azerbaijan  
**Born:** 24 December 1961 (age 62)  
**Influence:** Political  
**School of Thought:** Modern Sunni

30

Rank (2023): 28  
 Rank (2022): 29  
 Rank (2021): 29

Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari is an Azhari scholar, preacher, an academic and a 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 Dawah at Al-Azhar University, Egypt.

**Scholar:** Sheikh Usama was chosen by the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Gomaa, to deliver the Friday sermons on his behalf in the Sultan Hassan Mosque. He has studied with many esteemed scholars from all over the Islamic world, acquiring numerous authorizations (*ijazaat*), all testifying to his accepted position in the unbroken chains of transmission known as *isnad*, essential in the field of Islamic sciences and scholarship.

**Peace Activist:** He is considered to be one of the most influential voices calling for and working towards reaching new understandings founded on the Islamic tradition and in ways that accommodate the contemporary condition. In this regard, he has presented a number of original and fresh ideas attempting to renew authentic Islamic outlooks, through his publishing and scholarly contributions. Some of the ideas include creating a relational map of shariah sciences and their relationship with other circles of sciences, creating "Islamic hermeneutics", reviving the tradition of auditing religious sciences and transmitting them through a chain of transmission as a criterion of authenticity, and the Qur'anic accommodation of different civilizations, amongst others.

31

Rank (2023): 450 lists  
 Rank (2022): 450 lists  
 Rank (2021): 450 lists

President Ilham Aliyev has been serving his 4th term as President of Azerbaijan since October 2003. He is the son of former Azerbaijan leader, Heydar Aliyev, who was president from 1993 to 2003. He is an advocate of a moderate cultural Islam for the 9.8 million Muslims citizens, about 80% of whom are Shia.

**Early life:** Aliyev completed a PhD in history at Moscow State Institute of International Relations, where he remained as a lecturer from 1985 to 1990. From 1991 to 1994 he was involved in various business enterprises, then became vice president of the Azerbaijan oil and gas company, entering into politics in the late 1990s.

**Prosperity from oil:** Azerbaijan, rich in oil reserves, has enjoyed a period of prosperity and relative stability for the people and an increase of power and wealth of the ruling families. Aliyev's own family has benefitted immensely, owning parts of some major banks, construction and telecommunication firms and partially owning Azerbaijan's oil and gas industries, with most of that wealth being kept in offshore companies.

**Foreign policy:** During President Aliyev's tenure, Azerbaijan strengthened its ties and cooperation with the European Union (EU), developed economic relations with Russia, and cooperated with NATO. He also established close relations with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and was elected as the chair of the Turkic Council in 2019. Aliyev maintained generally positive relations and made agreements with countries such as France, Russia, the United States, and NATO.

**Nagorno-Karabakh conflict:** Nagorno-Karabakh, recognized internationally as part of Azerbaijan, has a majority Armenian population and is partially controlled by the breakaway Republic of Artsakh. A war in 2020 resulted in Azerbaijan's victory, but the conflict remains unresolved.



HH Shah Karim Al-Hussayni

The Aga Khan IV

Country: France

Born: 13 December 1936 (age 87)

Influence: Leader of Nizari

Ismailis

School of Thought: Modernist

Shia, Ismaili, Nizari



Al-Habib Muhammad Luthfi bin Yahya

Preacher

Country: Indonesia

Born: 10 November 1947 (age 76)

Influence: Scholarly, Spiritual

Guide

School of Thought: Traditional

Sunni



Rank (2023): 29

Rank (2022): 30

Rank (2021): 30

32



Rank (2020): 30

Rank (2022): 32

Rank (2021): 32

33



Shah Karim Al-Hussayni, also known simply as the Aga Khan (Imamate: 1957-present), is the leader of the Shia sect of Muslims known as the Nizari Ismailis. For 10–15 million Nizari Ismaili Muslims the Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam, with lineage descending back to Ali, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

**Hereditary Leader of Ismailis:** The Aga Khan, a hereditary title bestowed upon the Imam by the Shah of Persia in the mid-19th century, derives his position of authority from his lineage. At the age of 21 the Aga Khan bypassed his father and uncle to become the 4th Aga Khan and 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 Development Network (AKDN) is a collection of over 200 development and humanitarian agencies that work to improve the lives of people in over 30 countries. The network is widely known for its architectural and cultural work, including projects that revitalize historic cities. Some projects include the renovation of 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 AKDN is particularly influential in Central Asia, where it works in areas that are often neglected by other organizations. The period from July 2017 to July 2018 was designated the Diamond Jubilee Year of the Aga Khan’s 60th year of reign.

Habib Luthfi is currently *Ra’is ‘Amm of the Jam’iyyah Abli Thariqah Al-Mutabarrah Al-Nahdliyah* (Head of the Association of Recognised Sufi Orders), Head of MUI Middle Java, and the spiritual leader of the Ba Alawi tariqa in Indonesia. He is also a leading figure in the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim organization in the world with over 90 million members.

**Ba Alawi:** The Ba Alawi are descendants of the Prophet ﷺ who migrated to Hadramaut in Yemen early on in Islamic history. They played a major role in bringing Islam to the Far East, including Indonesia and Malaysia, and they hold high prominence to this day. They emphasize the importance of inward sincerity coupled with the study of religious sciences, especially as espoused by Imam Al-Ghazali.

**Seeker of Knowledge:** Habib Luthfi started his quest for knowledge early in life, and first studied under the tutelage of Ba Alawi teachers in Indonesia. He then travelled to Makkah and Madinah for further education and received authorization (*ijazaat*) in all the traditional fields of learning including hadith, and sufism (*tasawwuf*). His authorization to be a spiritual master comes from more than one *tariqah* (spiritual brotherhood).

**Preacher and Spiritual Guide:** Habib Luthfi is a well-known preacher and has published numerous books on Islamic theology, mysticism, and law. He is also a regular speaker at Islamic conferences and events around the world. Habib Luthfi’s has established thousands of schools, mosques, and zawiyahs (spiritual centers) in Indonesia. He has garnered a following numbering in the millions, emphasizing the importance of spiritual practices, particularly the recitation of litanies (*awrad*).



**Maulana Tariq Jameel**  
Scholar and Preacher  
**Country:** Pakistan  
**Born:** 1953 (age 70)  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Preacher  
**School of Thought:** Sunni,  
Tablighi Jamaat



**Sheikh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi**  
Scholar and Spiritual Guide  
**Country:** Syria  
**Born:** 7 May 1963 (age 60)  
**Influence:** Scholarly  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

34

Rank (2023): 32  
Rank (2022): 35  
Rank (2021): 35

Maulana Tariq Jameel is a prominent Deobandi scholar who is also one of the most popular preachers in Pakistan. He belongs to the Tablighi Jamaat and his lectures focus on the subject of self-purification, avoidance of violence, observance of Allah's orders and pursuing the way of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

**Background:** After completing pre-medical studies, Maulana Tariq was admitted to the King Edward Medical College in Lahore. It was there—under the influence of members of the Tablighi Jamaat—that his focus changed to Islamic education. His Islamic training is from Jamia Arabia, where he studied Qur'an, Hadith, Sufism, Logic, and Islamic Jurisprudence. Maulana Tariq's background in the sciences allows him to explain Islamic matters in a way that appeals to modern urban Muslims. Additionally, his simple lifestyle and eloquence in Urdu, as well as his fluency in Arabic, catapulted his fame across the Muslim world.

**Tablighi Jamaat:** Tablighi Jamaat is a political missionary movement founded by Muhammad Ilyas Al-Kandhlawi in India in 1927. It focuses on encouraging Muslims not to neglect the basic practices of their faith. It has informal affiliations with the Deobandi movement but targets a more general audience. The sub-continent diaspora have carried its message to nearly every country in the world and its adherents number in the millions. It has annual gatherings in Pakistan and Bangladesh which equally number in the millions.

**Influence:** In addition to running a madrasah in Faisalabad, Pakistan, Maulana Tariq has delivered thousands of lectures around the world. He has been very effective in influencing all types of the community ranging from businessmen and landlords to ministers, actors, and sports celebrities.

35

Rank (2023): 34  
Rank (2022): 37  
Rank (2021): 39

Sheikh Al-Yaqoubi is a widely respected religious scholar who also has a significant spiritual following worldwide. He was appointed as member of the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute of Islamic Thought in 2016.

**Background:** Sheikh Al-Yaqoubi was born in Damascus and was trained in Islamic studies by his father, who was an imam and instructor at the Grand Umayyad Mosque. Sheikh Al-Yaqoubi followed in his father's footsteps teaching in the same mosque and becoming a world-renowned Islamic scholar of theology, jurisprudence, and hadith. He is widely recognized as one of the reliable authorities for the issuing of fatwas in Islam.

**Against Extremism:** He was one of the first scholars to speak against DA'ISH, denouncing its atrocities and showing that its actions are un-Islamic. His book *Refuting ISIS* (now in eight languages), has become essential reading, providing theological arguments against extremists and calling on mainstream, traditional followers to combat them. His criticism of the Syrian government's response to protests made his stay in Syria untenable, and so he had to flee the country, eventually seeking refuge in Morocco where he is still based.

**Educator:** As a teacher, he has trained several hundred imams and teachers who work in the Arab World, the West, the Far East and South Africa. As a spiritual guide, he focuses on the spiritual well-being of Muslims and gives personal spiritual instruction to his disciples, of which he has a significant following in Europe and the USA. He is a charismatic public speaker in both Arabic and English (he also speaks Swedish) and one of the most powerful voices of Islam, making a huge positive impact via his public talks, writings and numerous media appearances worldwide. His public teaching includes readings of the entire collection of hadith in *Sahih Bukhari* and the renowned *Qasida Al-Burda* (The Poem of the Mantle), of Imam Busiri.

Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr  
 Philosopher and Professor  
**Country:** United States of America  
**Born:** 7 April 1933 (age 90)  
**Influence:** Scholarly  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Shia



HE Samia Suluhu Hassan  
 President of Tanzania  
**Country:** Tanzania  
**Born:** born 27 January 1960 (age 63)  
**Influence:** Political, Administration of Religious Affairs  
**School of Thought:** Sunni



Rank (2023): 35  
 Rank (2022): 38  
 Rank (2021): 40

36



Rank (2023): 38  
 Rank (2022): HM

37



Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr is University Professor of Islamic Studies 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 and has written over 50 books and over 500 articles.

**Background and Career:** Nasr was born in Iran and raised in a house of scholars and physicians. He was sent to school in the USA, won a scholarship to MIT for undergraduate studies in physics and obtained a doctorate in the history of science and philosophy from Harvard. He returned to Iran in 1958 where he swiftly rose through academic ranks to become Vice-Chancellor of Tehran University and then President of Aryamehr University. The 1979 Iranian revolution forced Nasr to leave Iran and so he settled in the USA.

**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 inter-faith relations, Islam–West relations, and the environmental crisis. Nasr was the first Muslim scholar ever to be invited to give the prestigious Gifford Lectures, which were later published as *Knowledge and the Sacred*. 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* (1968) critique 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.

**Legacy:** For Nasr, the quest for knowledge, specifically knowledge which “liberates and delivers him from the fetters and limitations of earthly existence”, has been and continues to be the central concern and determinant of his intellectual life.

Hassan is the current President of Tanzania, having assumed the post after the death of the former President in March 2021.

**Politician:** Born in 1960 in the Sultanate of Zanzibar, she ran for public office in 2000 and was elected as a special seat member to the Zanzibar House of Representatives. In 2010, she was elected to the National Assembly and was appointed as the Minister of State for Union Affairs. In 2015, she became the first female vice-president in the history of Tanzania after John Magufuli was elected president. The same pair won the 2020 elections.

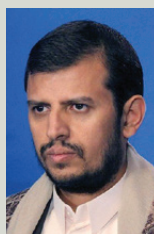
**President:** After Magufuli's death in 2021, she was sworn in as his successor, becoming Tanzania's first female President. Among her first actions as president were enacting nationwide mandates to curb the spread of covid-19 in the country. She publicly took the vaccination and encouraged others to do so, in stark contrast to her predecessor. She has consolidated her position in office and been praised for her approach in encouraging investment, tourism and diffusing tensions with neighbours, especially with Kenya over Bagamoyo port. She has continued in the same vein domestically as well, lifting the ban on political rallies and activities, releasing the opposition leader from prison and others, reversing other measures her predecessor enacted.

**Economic Success:** The economic reforms have bolstered the economy and her leadership style has increased confidence all round. Tanzania's GDP growth rate has averaged 6% per year since Hassan took office. Inflation fallen by 5% and foreign exchange reserves increased by 20%. Exports and tourism has also seen increases of 10-15% since she took office.





HE Sheikh Uthman Taha  
Calligrapher  
**Country:** Syria  
**Born:** 1934 (age 89)  
**Influence:** Calligrapher  
**School of Thought:** Sunni



Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi  
Leader of the Houthi  
**Country:** Yemen  
**Born:** 22 May 1979 (age 44)  
**Influence:** Political  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Shia

38

Rank (2023): 36  
Rank (2022): 39  
Rank (2021): 41

Uthman Taha is an internationally acclaimed Arabic calligrapher who has hand-written the *Mushaf Al-Madinah*, which is the copy of the Qur'an issued by the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an and thus read by hundreds of millions of Muslims.

**Background:** Sheikh Taha was born in 1934 near Aleppo, Syria. He developed a passion for calligraphy when very young, but had to wait until he moved to Damascus (where he gained a BA in Shariah at Damascus University) before he met the chief calligrapher in Syria, Muhammad Badawi Al-Diyarani, and the Iraqi calligrapher, Hashim Al-Baghdadi. He then travelled to Istanbul, where he met the most celebrated calligrapher of the time, Hamid Al-Amidi, from whom he received certification.

**Copying the Qur'an:** The written copy of the Qur'an is known as a *mushaf*, and it took Taha approximately three years to copy one out. He wrote his first copy in 1970 and in total has written out over ten copies. The most significant one was the one assigned to him in 1988 by the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an in Madinah. This copy is the one printed by the King Fahd Complex and distributed to millions of pilgrims every year. It is the most common copy of the Qur'an available worldwide. Taha has copied out six different textual variants including *Warsh* (used in Morocco and Algeria), *Hafs* (worldwide), *Duri* (Africa and Sudan), and *Qalun* (Libya).

39

Rank (2023): 31  
Rank (2022): 33  
Rank (2021): 33

Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi is the current leader of the Houthi political, religious and militant movement, which is a major political player in Yemen and the region.

**Houthi:** The Houthi movement was established in 1992 by Hussein Badr Al-Din Al-Houthi, a Zaydi Shia scholar and anti-Wahhabi who wrote a number of books criticizing Wahhabism and the leading authorities of Yemen. The Zaidis ruled most of Yemen for over 1,000 years until 1962. They believe that Muslims should be ruled only by a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, whom they call an Imam.

**Leader:** Abdul-Malik has made major changes in Yemen through tactical and strategic plans that have enabled him to reach the position where he is today. In 2007, he founded the Al-Minbar website and in 2012 he launched *Al-Masirah TV* channel.

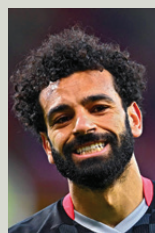
**Taking Yemen:** Abdul-Malik emerged as a leader after the February 2011 uprising. The Houthi authority seized control over Saada and Jawf provinces in March 2011. Then in 2014, the Houthis seized control over the Demag region in Saada and Amran provinces and in September 2014 they stormed the capital Sana'a, seizing a large number of ministries and military facilities. He has driven Al-Qaeda out of the regions which the Houthis have taken.

**Humanitarian Toll:** Since 2015, they have been subject to aerial bombing by a Saudi-led coalition. This bombing of one of the world's poorest countries has led to over 150,000 fatalities and a humanitarian crisis claiming over 200,000 deaths as well as leaving around 70% of the population (27 million) reliant on humanitarian aid and over a million people infected by cholera. The UK in particular has come under international criticism for its supply of weapons which were used in the bombardment.

Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi  
President of Ennahda Party  
**Country:** Tunisia  
**Born:** 1941 (age 82)  
**Influence:** Political, Scholarly  
**School of Thought:** Sunni



Mohamed Salah  
Footballer  
**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 15 June 1992 (age 31)  
**Influence:** Celebrities and Sports  
**School of Thought:** Sunni



Rank (2023): 37  
Rank (2022): 40  
Rank (2021): 38

40



Ghannouchi is one of the world's leading Islamic thinkers and one of the most influential Arab politicians in the post-Arab Spring transition period. Authoring over 20 books, he has led a life filled with imprisonment, exile, and governance.

**Politics:** Ghannouchi co-founded The Ennahda Movement ("Renaissance") in the 1970s and was imprisoned several times before being forced into exile. The Ennahda is a political party based on Islamic values resembling the Christian Democratic political parties in Europe. It supports the concept of a multi-party democracy. In 2012 he received the Chatham House Prize for "the successful compromises each achieved during Tunisia's democratic transition" and in 2016 he received the Jamnalal Bajaj Award for "promoting Gandhian values outside India".

**Post Arab Spring:** With the fall of President Ben Ali, Ghannouchi returned to Tunisia in January 2011 having spent 20 years in exile. He led the Ennahda (Renaissance) Party to victory in the October 2011 national elections. In 2014, Ghannouchi quit government and handed power over to a technocratic government. When elections were held later that year, Ennahda, without Ghannouchi leading them, came second to the Nidaa Tounes party. The 2019 elections produced a deeply fragmented parliament with the government collapsing just five months into its term. Ghannouchi, who was elected speaker of parliament, narrowly won a vote of confidence in July 2020.

**Imprisonment Again:** After parliament was suspended in 2021 by democratically elected President Saied, many opposition leaders started being arrested. Ghannouchi's turn came in April 2023 and he was sentenced a month later to a year in prison on terrorism-related charges.

Rank (2023): 39  
Rank (2022): 41  
Rank (2021): 42

41



Mohamed Salah is an Egyptian football player of global fame with over 98 million social media followers. Like many sporting stars, he is an icon and inspiration for millions.

**International Player:** Salah started his career in the Egyptian Premier League in 2010 before moving to Switzerland, UK, Italy and then UK again. Salah enjoyed the most successful season of his career with Liverpool FC in 2017/18. He broke many records and won many accolades. He also helped Egypt qualify for the World Cup. The 2018/19 season saw more success with Liverpool FC being runners-up in the English Premier League, and crowned 2019 European Champions and World Club Champions. The 2019/20 season saw the end of a 30-year wait for Liverpool to become champions of the English league again.

**Popularity:** His affable nature and polite manners have won him many fans across the globe, and none more so than in his native country of Egypt where he has donated to various charitable causes. In the March 2018 Egyptian presidential elections, over a million people struck out the two names vying for the presidency and inserted Mohamed Salah's name, making him an unofficial runner-up in the election. His down-to-earth nature has shown itself in chance meetings with fans and acts of kindness towards those in need. He has over 97 million followers on social media and now has a wax model in Madame Tussauds.

**Singing in the Terraces:** His footballing exploits during his time at Liverpool FC have had the unprecedented effect of football fans singing positive songs about Muslims. "If he's good enough for you, he's good enough for me. If he scores another few, then I'll be Muslim too. Sitting in the mosque, that's where I wanna be! Mo Salah-la-la-la, la-la-la-la-la-la-la."



**Sheikh Muqtada Sadr**

Scholar and Politician

**Country:** Iraq

**Born:** 4 August 1974 (age 49)

**Influence:** Political, Social Issues

**School of Thought:** Shia



**Maulana Nazur Rahman**

Amir of Tablighi Jamaat

**Country:** Pakistan

**Born:** 1929 (age 94)

**Influence:** Preacher,  
Administration of Religious Affairs

**School of Thought:** Sunni

42

Rank (2023): 41

Rank (2022): 42

Rank (2021): 43

43

Rank: (2023) 42

Rank (2022): 43

Rank: (2021) 45

The son of the late Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Sadiq Al-Sadr, and son-in-law of Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr, Muqtada is a highly influential leader who inherited control over large social institutions that served millions in the slums of Baghdad.

**Serving the Poor:** He has focussed on serving Iraq's poor Shia Muslims and has had complete freedom to work in many parts of Iraq, especially Sadr City, a district in Baghdad named after his father. He provides healthcare and access to food and clean water. He has raised issues of corruption, high unemployment and poor government services.

**Politics:** 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. This is now known as Saraya Al-Salam. Through it he has concentrated on campaigning against corruption in Iraq, criticising the government openly about this. He has worked for Shia-Sunni unity, and in 2017 called for Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad to step down, and also met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

**Power-Broker:** The Sadrist-led coalition won 73 seats in the 2021 elections, beating the Iranian backed coalition, but he was unable to form a government and so Sadr withdrew his coalition and stated he would quit politics. There were violent clashes between the supporters of the two coalitions which led to fears of an all-out intra-Shia civil war, but Sadr played a prominent role in preventing this. He still influences policies through his power on the streets. In July 2023, his supporters stormed the Swedish embassy in Baghdad on Thursday and set it on fire in protest against the expected burning of a Qur'an in Sweden. This pressured the Iraqi government to expel the Swedish ambassador to Iraq and revoke work permits for Swedish companies.

Maulana Nazur Rahman is the 4th Amir of the Pakistani Tablighi Jamaat. He succeeded Hajji Abdul-Wahhab who passed away in November 2018, age 96.

**New Leader:** A change of leadership changes nothing for the Pakistan chapter of the Tablighi Jamaat—a transnational Islamic organization dedicated to reminding Muslims of their duty to fulfill their religious obligations. Maulana Nazur was the Deputy Amir and one of three people named by the previous Amir as contenders for the position of Amir upon his demise.

**Missionaries:** As Amir, or leader of Pakistan's Tablighi Jamaat, Maulana Nazur Rahman's influence spans globally due to the organization's emphasis on missionary work. It is active in over 150 countries and famously involves people in small groups travelling to Muslim communities reminding individuals about their religious duties. This act of dawah or exhortation towards fulfilling religious duties is seen as a cornerstone of the faith and has enabled it to acquire a massive membership base of hundreds of millions. The Tablighi Jamaat has close ties with the prominent Islamic institution Darul Uloom Deoband, in India. It is where the founder, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelvi, 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, prominent politicians, actors, and sports stars all publicly show allegiance to the group. This is done easily because the TJ is wholly apolitical. It is identified as a spiritual revivalist movement. It condemns violence and distances itself from any militant groups. Annual gatherings in Raiwind, Pakistan draw close to 2 million people, and those in Biswa, Bangladesh attract over 3 million.



Dr Timothy Winter (Sheikh  
Abdal-Hakim Winter)

Scholar

**Country:** UK

**Born:** 1960 (age 63)

**Influence:** Scholarly, Preacher,  
Administration of Religious Affairs

**School of Thought:** Sunni



HE Ibrahim Saleh Al-  
Hussaini

Scholar

**Country:** Nigeria

**Born:** 12 May 1938 (age 85)

**Influence:** Scholarly,  
Administration of Religious Affairs

**School of Thought:** Sunni



Rank (2023): 44

Rank (2021): 45

Rank (2021): 47

44



Professor Timothy Winter, also known as Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad, is an academic who has been actively involved in numerous initiatives in the UK over the past four decades.

**Academic:** He is currently the Sheikh Zayed Lecturer of Islamic Studies in the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge University and Director of Studies in Theology at Wolfson College. He has published and contributed to numerous academic works on Islam and among his best-known works are translations from Imam Al-Ghazali's *Ihya*, a series of aphorisms (*Commentary on the Eleventh Contentions*) and his most recent book, *Travelling Home: Essays on Islam in Europe*.

**Educator:** He is founder of the Cambridge Muslim College, which has offered Diploma courses for British Dar Al-Ulum graduates and now has an accredited BA programme which is offered to graduate religious leaders who are confident, competent and conversant with the issues of the age. He is a much sought-after speaker and contributes regularly to the media and is fluent in several languages. Hundreds of YouTube videos of his lectures and talks form an important source of knowledge for English-speaking Muslims. His Paradigms of Leadership lecture series focuses on exemplary figures in Islamic history and has proved to be particularly popular.

**Cambridge Mosque:** Professor Winter has been the main force behind the decade-long project to build the Cambridge Central Mosque. The mosque represents an authentic Islamic design contextualized to its location and times. It is Europe's first eco-mosque, having been designed with a high degree of environment sustainability. It also incorporates a café and meeting rooms for use by the whole community. The mosque opened in April 2019 and has taken its place as an iconic standard for all places of worship in the country.

Rank (2023): 45

Rank (2022): 47

Rank (2021): 48

45



Sheikh Dr Ibrahim Saleh Al-Hussaini is currently the head of the Supreme Council for Fatwa and Islamic Affairs in Nigeria and a member of the Muslim Council of Elders which embraces prominent scholars.

**Early Studies:** Sheikh Ibrahim was born in Borno State in north-eastern Nigeria in 1938 and started his quest for knowledge at a very young age by accompanying his father, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Salih bin Yunus Al-Nawwy. He lost his father at the age of seven, and so completed his initial studies at the Supreme Islamic Institute in Nigeria and then studied at the hands of renowned scholars in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, India, Pakistan, Senegal, Niger and Sudan.

**Scholar:** Sheikh Ibrahim lectures in the fields of *tafsir* (exegesis) and hadith as well as Islamic Sciences, jurisprudence and ethics. He has authored over 100 written works. He has held and still heads several significant positions, some of which are: founder and mentor of the Islamic Renaissance Organization, Adviser to the Federal Government on its Islamic Affairs since 1992, Assistant Secretary-General for African Affairs in the World Islamic People's Leadership 1989, and many more.

**Current:** He recently opened the Sheikh Sharif Ibrahim Saleh Islamic Centre, which will focus on teaching and research. Its aim is to "promote a better understanding of contemporary challenges and how to face and handle such challenges in today's world".



**HE Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada**  
 Leader of the Taliban  
**Country:** Afghanistan  
**Born:** 1 January 1966 (age 57)  
**Influence:** Leader of Taliban which governs 42 million  
**School of Thought:** Deobandi/Taliban



**Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri**  
 Preachers & Spiritual Guides  
**Country:** Pakistan  
**Born:** 12 July 1950 (age 73)  
**Influence:** Spiritual guide and preacher  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni Barelvi

46

Rank (2023): 49  
 Rank (2022): 50  
 Rank (2021) 450 Lists

47

Rank (2023): 50  
 Rank (2022): HM  
 Rank (2021): HM

Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada was named Taliban leader in 2016 after a US drone strike killed the previous leader Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour. Akhundzada is known primarily as a religious leader who ran schools from which many of the Taliban have graduated.

**Mujahideen and Taliban 1.0:** Akhundzada is a former member of the Mujahideen, who fought against the Soviet Union invasion during the 1980s. However, during that time, he was known more for his religious guidance rather than military leadership. He continued in the position as a religious counsellor during the formation of the Taliban in the 1990s and, after the Taliban captured the western Farah province, he was put in charge of reducing crime in the area. Later on, he took on the position as head of the military court, arbitrating disputes among Taliban members. After the US invasion in 2001, he became both head of the Taliban's council of religious scholars, and as teacher in a village near the Pakistani border for 15 years until his sudden disappearance in 2016.

**Taliban 2.0:** After the United States' withdrawal in 2021 and the Taliban's subsequent takeover, Akhundzada has become the head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. In 2022 he vetoed a plan for girls in grades 7 to 12 to return to school, ordered a ban on foreign broadcasts from inside Afghanistan, instructed the government to enforce gender segregation of public parks, prevented women from boarding aircraft if unaccompanied by a male chaperone, and barred male civil servants from going to work if they are not wearing a turban or sporting a full beard. He has published a decree requiring all women in Afghanistan cover their entire bodies except for their eyes when in public, with the burqah being the recommended covering; and in addition he has issued a decree banning criticism or dissension against the Islamic Emirate.

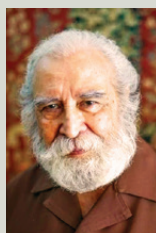
Sheikh Qadiri is an Islamic scholar belonging to the Qadri Razawi order and is the leader of Dawat-e-Islami, a global religious organization spread over 195 countries and operating in over 100,000 mosques and Islamic centres. Sheikh Ilyas Qadiri studied for 22 years under the former Grand Mufti of Pakistan, Sheikh Mufti Waqar ud-Din Qadri Razavi. He has authored over 30 books, including *Faizan-e-Sunnat*, on the merits of good deeds

**The Barelvis:** Dawat-e-Islami was formed by followers of the Barelvi school. Barelvis follow the teachings of Imam Ahmed Raza Khan (1856-1921), a polymath known reverentially as Ala Hazrat, who left a huge corpus of writings. A key message of this corpus is having sufficient veneration of the Prophet (SAW) and it is the perceived lack of this which has often led to criticism of the Tablighi Jamaat and the Deobandi movements, despite all following the Sunni Hanafi school of jurisprudence. Imam Ahmad Raza was buried in his hometown, Bareilly, from which his movement takes its name.

**Dawat-e-Islami:** Ilyas Qadiri was head of the youth wing of Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) when he was chosen to head the newly formed Dawat-e-Islami in 1981 in Karachi. This movement quickly spread to all parts of Pakistan and soon all around the world.

**Global Following:** The subcontinent diaspora has carried the movement globally and it is estimated that it has over 200 million followers in over 195 countries. It is non-political, emphasizing the love of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the key component of faith. It centres on the propagation of Islamic knowledge and manages two main activities: the Jamiat-ul-Madina chain of religious schools, and the non-commercial Madani TV channel.

Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas  
 Scholarly  
 Country: Malaysia  
 Born: 5 September 1931 (age 92)  
**Influence:** Scholarly thought  
**School of Thought:** Traditional  
 Sunni



Dr Amr Khaled  
 Preacher and Social Activist  
**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 5 September 1967 (age 56)  
**Influence:** Media, popular  
 multimedia preacher  
**School of Thought:** Traditional  
 Sunni



Rank (2023): HM  
 Rank (2022): HM  
 Rank (2021): HM

48



Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas was born in Bogor, West Java. He received his early education in Sukabumi and Johor Bahru. He later studied at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, England and, subsequently, at the University of Malaya, McGill University (MA) and the University of London (PhD) focusing on Islamic philosophy, theology and metaphysics.

**Scholar:** Tan Sri Syed Naquib has written over 30 books in the fields of Islamic philosophy, theology and metaphysics, history, literature, art and civilization, religion and education. He is among the few contemporary scholars who is also thoroughly rooted in the traditional Islamic sciences. His magnum opus is *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam* and his latest book (2023) is *Islām: The Covenants Fulfilled*.

**Institutions:** As a scholar of Islam, Tan Sri Syed Naquib has made significant contributions to the contemporary world of Islam in the domains of the Islamization of contemporary knowledge and of Muslim education. He was responsible for the conceptualization of the Islamic University, which he initially formulated at the First World Conference on Muslim Education, held in Makkah (1979). In 1987, Tan Sri Syed Naquib founded and directed the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), which is a major, global academic institution. He has inspired a generation of new scholars including Professor Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, who is the current holder of The Distinguished Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas Chair of Islamic Thought at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM).

Rank (2023): 47  
 Rank (2022): 49  
 Rank (2021): 50

49



Amr Khaled has been a televangelist to the Islamic world since 1998. He communicates through his TV shows and web campaigns using Islamic ethics in order 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. Khaled is credited with the launch of the first Muslim reality TV show *Mujaddidun* on Dubai Television. His website is translated from Arabic into nearly 20 languages and his videos have racked up over 196 million views on YouTube. He has over 46 million subscribers on his various social media.

**Community Development:** Khaled's goal is to encourage community development in the Muslim world by its own people with religious faith as the guiding inspiration—something he believes should be linked to interfaith dialogue, tolerance and moderation. The break-up of communities is something Khaled sees as responsible for the malaise in the Muslim World, and something he believes puts the future of young people in jeopardy. One programme he launched to realize this objective of community development was *Life Makers*, which had the stated goal to encourage youth to work in charity. The show was a great hit and expanded into one of the most famous charity organizations in Egypt.





Professor Mustafa Abu  
Sway

Scholar

**Country:** Palestine

**Born:** 1958 (age 65)

**Influence:** Scholarly activity, social  
and political

**School of Thought:** Traditional  
Sunni

50

Rank (2023): 450 lists

Rank (2022): 450 lists

Rank (2021): 450 lists

Professor Abu Sway is a scholar who frequently lectures globally as well as in the heart of Jerusalem, Palestine, at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, where he also reads from Imam Ghazali's *Ihya Ulum ud-Din*, making it accessible to English speaking Muslims as well. He is a member of Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, and the Islamic Waqf Council in Jerusalem.

**Scholar:** Professor Abu Sway earned his PhD from Boston College (1993), with his dissertation entitled: *The Development of Al-Ghazali's Genetic Epistemology*. He is author of three books on Imam Al-Ghazali: *Islamic Epistemology: The Case of Al-Ghazali*, *Fatawa Al-Ghazali* (Arabic) and *A Treasury of Al-Ghazali*. He has dozens of published articles on other topics such as interfaith relations, Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and Jerusalem.

**Academic Appointments:** Professor Abu Sway was appointed as the first holder of the King Abdullah II Integral Professorial Chair for the Study of Imam Ghazali's Work at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and at Al-Quds University in 2012. He has also been Professor of Philosophy and Islamic Studies at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem since 1996, as well as being Dean, College of Dawah and Usul Al-Din, and College of the Qur'an and Islamic Studies from 2014-2020. 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 (2003-4), as well as a Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies at Bard College, NY (2008-10).

**Speaker:** He is frequently invited to give lectures world-wide and his ability to address controversial and sensitive topics with a calm and clear delivery makes him a rare and influential voice capable of leaving a lasting impact on a wide range of audiences.

# THE TOP 50 INS & OUTS

## PASSED AWAY

- Sheikha Munira Qubeysi, Leader of the Qubeysi (25)  
page 192

## THE INS

- Dr Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, Malaysia (HM)  
page 101
- HE Ismail Haniyeh  
page 69
- HE Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia (HM)  
page 73
- President Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan (450 lists)  
page 92
- Dr Ibrahim Kalin (450 lists)  
page 87
- Professor Mustafa Abu Sway (450 lists)  
(see left)

## THE OUTS

- Moez Masoud, Preacher and Televangelist (43) to 450 lists  
page 139
- Dr Aref Ali Nayed, Scholar (48) to HM  
page 104
- HE President Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria (17) OUT
- HE President Halimah Yacob, Singapore (33) to 450 lists  
page 156
- Dr Mohamed Bechari, French activist (46) to HM  
page 106

# HONOURABLE MENTIONS

**HE Grand Ayatollah  
Abdullah Jawadi Amoli**  
Scholarly  
Country: Iran  
Born: 1933 (age 90)



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 widely 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.

**HE Grand Ayatollah  
Mohammad Ishaq Fayadh**  
Scholarly  
Country: Iraq  
Born: 1930 (age 93)



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

**Dr Aref Ali Nayed**  
Scholarly  
Country: Libya  
Born: 31 December 1962 (age 61)



Dr Aref Ali Nayed is a Libyan public figure, a renowned scholar in the field of Islamic Theology (*kalām*) and Philosophy, and a leading pioneer of inter-faith relations. He was former Ambassador of Libya to the UAE, former Special Envoy of the President of the Libya House of Representatives to USA, UK, European and African Unions, and led the Libya Stabilisation Team in 2011—and has since played a vital and positive role in the revitalization of the Libyan political track. Nayed is the Founder and Chairman of two leading think tanks, Kalam Research & Media (KRM) and the Libya Institute for Advanced Studies (LIAS). He is also currently a Visiting Senior Research Affiliate of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia. He was former professor at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Rome), and a former professor

at the International Institute for Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC, Malaysia).

**Professor M Din Syamsuddin**  
Scholarly  
Country: Indonesia  
Born: 31 December 1958 (age 65)



Professor Din Syamsuddin served as chairman (2005-2015) of the largest modernist Islamic organization in Indonesia, the Muhammadiyah. He also served as chairman of the Indonesian Council of Ulama and is currently acting as chairman of its Advisory Council. He is a member of Group of Strategic Vision Russia – Islamic World, Chairman of the World Peace Forum and President of the Inter Religious Council–Indonesia. He was recently re-elected for another five-year term as President of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP). Syamsuddin is still very active in interfaith and intercultural dialogue and was appointed the Special Envoy for Religious Harmony by President Widodo.

**Professor Akbar Ahmed**  
Scholarly  
Country: Pakistan  
Born: 15 January 1943 (age 80)



Professor Dr Akbar Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University in Washington, DC and the former Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK and Ireland. In addition to his academic and public sector careers, Ahmed has produced a number of noteworthy films and authored more than a dozen award-winning books. He produced the Jinnah Quartet and feature film, *Jinnah* (1998). He was awarded the 2017 Sir Syed Day Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in Poetry, Literature, Arts and the Sciences and declared the 2017 Scholar/Teacher of the Year of the American University School of International Service. Ahmed was awarded the Diplomatic Leadership Award in 2019 from PakPac USA for outstanding academic endeavor. He has produced two films: *Journey into America* and *Journey into Europe*, which are both accompanied with books with the same titles.



### Dr Ingrid Mattson

Scholarly

Country: Canada

Born: 24 August 1963 (age 60)

Dr Ingrid Mattson is the London and Windsor Community Chair in Islamic Studies at Huron University College at Western University in Canada. Previously she had worked for 14 years as Professor at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, and served as Director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. In 2001 she was elected vice president of ISNA and in 2006 she was elected president. She is the author of the highly acclaimed *The Story of the Qur'an*. In late 2018, Dr Mattson founded a major project to uphold the sacred inviolability (*hurma*) of those who enter Muslim spaces from exploitation and abuse by those holding religious power and authority. The Hurma Project is conducting research, education, training and protocols for professional oversight for imams, chaplains, mosque boards and others.



### HE Mohammed Shayya Al-Sudani

Political

Country: Iraq

Born: 1970 (age 53)

Mohammed Shayya Sabbar Al-Sudani is the current Prime Minister of Iraq. Previously, he served as the Governor of Maysan Province (2009-2010) as well as the Human Rights Minister (2010-2014). He was nominated for post of prime minister during a year-long political crisis and succeeded in forming a government in October 2022 despite Muqtada Al-Sadr's opposition. The latter has rallied against excessive Iranian and USA involvement in the governance of Iraq. In July 2023, after Sweden approved a planned Qur'an-burning, Al-Sudani expelled the Swedish ambassador to Iraq and revoked work permits for Swedish companies.



### HE President Mahmoud Abbas

Political

Country: Palestine

Born: 15 November 1935 (age 88)

Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, is the President of the Palestinian National Authority, and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). He is one of the few surviving founder members of Fatah, the main political grouping within the PLO, and was one of the principal architects of the Oslo Peace Process. He accompanied Yassir Arafat to the White House to sign the Oslo Accords. He was elected President of the PNA in 2005 in what was due to be a four-year term. No elections have been held since then, and so he remains President. President Abbas opposed the "Deal of the Century", refusing promises of billions worth of investment, but suffered the consequences with aid cuts of hundreds of millions of dollars by the US leaving the economy in ruins. The financial crisis has led to deep salary cuts which in turn have fuelled further unpopularity to his rule.



### HE Sheikh Hasina Wazed

Political

Country: Bangladesh

Born: 28 Sept 1947 (age 76)

Sheikh Hasina Wazed has been Prime Minister of Bangladesh since 2009, having won elections in 2008, 2014 and 2018. She had also previously served as prime minister from 1996-2001, making a combined total of over 19 years, thus making her the world's longest-serving female head of government in history. Wazed is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father of Bangladesh, who was assassinated in 1975 during a coup d'état which also saw Hasina lose virtually all her family. She lived in exile in India until 1981, when as president of the Awami League she returned home. In 2012 she maintained a hard-line stance and refused entry to Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar, but in 2017, nearly a million Rohingya entered the country and Hasina received praise for giving them due assistance.



## HE Imran Khan

Political

Country: Pakistan

Born: 5 October 1952 (age 71)

Imran Khan became the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 2018 amid huge expectations that he could bring the country forward on issues of governance, accountability and reduction of corruption. He endured a tough time before being ousted in April 2022 through a no-confidence motion. He has maintained that foreign interference played a major role in his ousting and pointed fingers at various institutions in the country. In August 2023, Khan was arrested and sentenced to three years imprisonment. Khan still maintains massive popular support in the country as well as with the large and powerful Pakistani diaspora. His challenges are seen as part of the inevitable results of trying to change a system rife with corruption and of trying to reduce the role of the military.



## Sadiq Khan

Political

Country: United Kingdom

Born: 8 October 1970 (age 53)

Sadiq Khan, the son of a London bus driver, was elected the Mayor of London in May 2016 and then re-elected in May 2021. His journey to arguably one of the highest posts in the UK included being a human rights solicitor, chair of the human rights group Liberty, councillor for Wandsworth, and then MP for Tooting from 2005-2016. He is a member of the Labour Party and served as Minister in two posts in Gordon Brown's government as well as serving in Ed Miliband's shadow cabinet in more senior ministerial posts. Much has been made of his British Pakistani ethnicity as well as him being Muslim, but he has stressed that those parts of his identity merely strengthen his willingness to serve all parts of society. He has worked to build cohesion among London's diverse communities.



## Aminu Ado Bayero

Administration of Religious Affairs

Country: Nigeria

Born: 1961 (age 62)

Aminu Ado Bayero became the 15th Emir of Kano on 9 March 2020. His father had been the 13th Emir (1963-2014) but was succeeded by a nephew, who was subsequently dethroned by the Kano state government in 2020, allowing Bayero to claim the title. The Emir of Kano is historically the second most important Muslim position in Nigeria after the Sultan of Sokoto. The Emir of Kano serves as the leader of the Tijani sufi order in Nigeria.



## Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani

Administration of Religious Affairs

Country: India

Born: 14 Jan 1947 (age 76)

Maulana Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani is the current Mohtamim (Vice-Chancellor) of Darul Uloom Deoband in India. He was elected as Mohtamim on 23 July 2011 succeeding Maulana Ghulam Muhammad Vastanvi. The Deoband Darul Uloom is where the Deobandi school was established and it is still the worldwide centre, having some 7,000 students. Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani graduated from Darul Uloom Deoband in 1967 and was appointed as Member of Majlis Shura (Governing Body) of Darul Uloom in 1992.



## Dr Mohammed Bechari

Administration of Religious Affairs

Born: 16 April 1967 (age 55)

Dr Mohammed Bechari is a leading figure in the landscape of European Islam. He heads a variety of organizations that seek to better represent French and European Muslims in the wider society as well as working to empower their own communities. He is the Secretary General of the UAE-based World Muslim Communities Council, 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 entity representing European Muslims at the European level. Bechari is the founder of the Avicenna Institute in Lille and member of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz



International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) in Vienna.

### Sheikh Nuh Keller

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

Country: Jordan

Born: 1954 (age 69)



Sheikh Nuh Keller's *Reliance of the Traveller* is the first Islamic legal work translated into a European language to receive certification from the Al-Azhar University. He also possesses a number of *ijazas* in various disciplines, most notably as an authorized sheikh of the Shadhiliyyah Sufi order. He teaches students from his *zawiyyah* in Jordan as well as at annual gatherings all over the world. In 2022, Keller released a translation of the Quran entitled *The Quran Beheld*.

### Dr Muhammad Al-Arifi

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 16 July 1970 (age 53)



Dr Al-Arifi is a well-known scholar and lecturer from Saudi Arabia. He is a founding and honorary member of various dawah organizations, 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. He has over 42 million followers on social media.

### Zakir Abdul Karim Naik

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

Country: India

Born: 18 October 1965 (age 58)



Zakir Abdul Karim Naik is a popular preacher and comparative religion specialist in the mould of the legendary Ahmed Deedat. Naik challenges leaders of other faiths to public debates that are broadcast around the world on Peace TV—a satellite channel that he helped to found. In 2015, he was awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Services to Islam. Since 2016 he has been resident in Malaysia but is being investigated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on incitement to terror and money-laundering charges. India has requested extradition so he might stand trial on those charges.

In 2021, Naik launched Al Hidaayah, a new platform with educational content from renowned Islamic speakers from all over the world. His Youtube channel has close to 255 million views and he has over 23 million Facebook followers.

### Ahed Tamimi

Social Issues

Country: Palestine

Born: 31 January 2001 (age 22)



Ahed Tamimi is a Palestinian who has become a globally recognized icon for resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In 2017, she confronted Israeli soldiers who entered her yard in the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh, and then proceeded to slap and kick them. Her mother was recording the incident and later the video went viral. A few days later, at night, the Israeli army's own camera documented soldiers entering her house, handcuffing and arresting Tamimi. She was then subject to interrogation, a fate common to most Palestinian youth living under occupation, detained for three months and sentenced to eight months in jail. Her mother was also imprisoned but never charged. Ahed was released after serving eight months as a political prisoner and received worldwide support for highlighting the oppressive life faced by Palestinians. She has recently published a book entitled *They Called Me a Lioness*.

### Loujain Al-Hathloul

Social Issues

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 31 July 1989 (age 34)



Al-Hathloul is a Saudi women's rights activist who was released from prison in 2021 after serving two years, but is under strict conditions of no travelling or political engagement. She was a fierce critic of the law forbidding women to drive in Saudi Arabia and she used social media to challenge this and the male guardianship system. In 2014, she was detained for 73 days after she attempted to drive into Saudi Arabia from the United Arab Emirates. A year later, Al-Hathloul attempted to stand in the local elections, which marked the first time Saudi women were allowed to vote, but was ultimately barred. She was detained again in 2018, but this time she was tortured and held in prison without charges or trial for ten months, but then charged the following year with attempting to destabilize the



kingdom. She is continuing with a US lawsuit against an Emirati cyber-surveillance firm (Dark Matter) and three former US intelligence operatives accused of hacking her iPhone which led to her extradition from the UAE to Saudi.

### Malala Yousafzai

Social Issues

Country: Pakistan

Born: 12 July 1997 (age 26)

Yousufzai's rise to prominence began tragically when the Taliban shot her in a school bus for encouraging girls to go to school in Swat.

After the assassination attempt, Malala was flown to England, where she recovered and continued her schooling. She received high-profile support for her campaign to ensure that all children worldwide be schooled. In 2013, Yousafzai addressed the UN, received the prestigious Sakharov Prize, and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, which she co-received in 2014 at the age of 17, thereby becoming its youngest-ever recipient. She has been granted audiences with royalty and world leaders, and this along with her high-profile international exposure has led some in her native Pakistan to question whether she has overreached. Now graduated from Oxford University, books published and contracts from media companies, her global profile continues to rise.



### Dr Uğur Şahin

Science & Technology

Country: Germany

Born: 1965 (age 58)

Uğur Şahin is an immunologist who co-founded BioNTech, the company which developed one of the major vaccines against covid-19. His family emigrated to Germany from Türkiye, where he studied medicine at the University of Cologne. He has worked as a professor and lecturer at various university hospitals across Germany. In 2008 Şahin founded BioNTech with his wife, Özlem Türeci and mentor, Christoph Huber. The main focus of his research work is the discovery of mRNA-based drugs for use as individualized cancer immunotherapies, but with the advent of the covid-19 pandemic, BioNTech pivoted to using mRNA-based drugs towards fighting this new threat. By the end of 2020, BioNTech developed the BNT162b2 vaccine and reported a 95% efficacy against the covid-19 disease and became the first mRNA drug approved for hu-



man use. Subsequently, Şahin entered a partnership with Pfizer pharmaceutical company to distribute it worldwide.

### Sami Yusuf

Arts & Culture

Country: United Kingdom

Born: 19 July 1980 (age 43)

Sami Yusuf is an internationally renowned British composer, producer, vocalist and master musician who has created a revolution in the music industry. Sami Yusuf's works are often inspired by traditional musical systems and mystical poetry that enlighten and inspire the listener. For the past several years, his focus has been on revivifying and promoting musical heritage and he has demonstrated a unique ability to engage contemporary audiences with his dramatically staged performances of his compositions inspired by centuries-old traditions. Performing at sold-out venues on six continents, his music appeals to all age groups, ethnicities and beliefs across the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and North America. With downloads of over a billion, Sami Yusuf has released nine studio albums to date, has over 45 million albums sold, and has 20 million followers across his social media platforms. The artist is also known for his extensive involvement in global charitable initiatives.



### Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Al-Sudais

Qur'an Reciters

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 10 February 1960 (age 63)

Al-Sudais is the chief of the Imams at the Grand Mosque of Makkah. He memorized the Qur'an at the age of 12, and studied shariah 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. In 2005, he was named by the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award (DIHQA) Organising Committee as its 9th annual "Islamic Personality Of the Year" in recognition of his devotion to the Qur'an and Islam. In 2017, Al-Sudais supervised the film *One Day In The Haram*, a film about the Haram in Makkah, told through the eyes of the workers.



## Sadio Mane

Celebrities & Sports

Country: Senegal

Born: 10 April 1992 (age 31)



Sadio Mane is a Senegalese footballer globally renowned as one of the best footballers in the world. He had been instrumental in Liverpool's success (2016-2022) winning the Champions League in 2019 and then ending a 30-year wait to win the Premier League in 2020. He also played for the Senegal team which reached the 2020 African nations cup final. He recently moved to the Saudi Pro League club Al Nassr from Bayern Munich. He is seen making supplication before the start of each match and performs a prostration every time he scores a goal. He is well known for his modest and humble personality, and has donated significant amounts of his personal wealth to develop the infrastructure in his hometown of Sedhiou. He transformed his childhood village of Bambalia—a village in the south of Senegal—with a number of charitable works, including building a new hospital, school, mosque, sports stadium and other infrastructures.

## Khabib Nurmagomedov

Celebrities & Sports

Country: Russia

Born: 20 September 1988 (age 35)



Khabib Nurmagomedov is a former mixed martial artist. As well as being the youngest Russian wrestler in history to compete in the UFC, he was also the first Russian and Muslim to win a UFC title. He was the Lightweight UFC champion holding the longest undefeated streak in MMA history with 29 wins before retiring in March 2021. He is ethnically from the Russian republic of Dagestan and has chosen the nickname "the eagle" to pay homage to this region. This has won him great support amongst many Muslim youth not only in Dagestan but also in Chechnya and other ex-soviet Muslim majority countries. His appeal is not limited to these as he has managed to transcend ethnic complexities and become one of Russia's most popular sportsmen. He has 43 million followers on social media.



My Lord, cause me to land with a landing blessed, for  
You are the best of all who bring to land.

*The Believers, 29*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

عُرِجَ عَادُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ فِي عَمَلٍ يَجْعَلُهُ جَلِيًّا خَيْرًا لِيَعْمَلَ بِهِ خَلْقُ الْجَنَّةِ وَيُنَاقِشَ النَّارَ الْقَدِيمَةَ النَّجْمَ عَظِيمًا  
وَأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ عَلَى مَنَنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَيْنٌ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ شَيْئًا وَيَقِي الصَّلَاةَ وَالزَّكَاةَ وَيَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ وَيُحْجُ الْبَيْتَ  
ثُمَّ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ عَلَى أَوَّلِ الْحَبْرِ الصُّومُ حَبْنَةُ وَالصَّدَقَةُ طِفْطِفُ الطَّيْنَةِ كَمَا يُطْفِئُ الْمَاءُ النَّارَ وَصَلَاةُ الْحَاجِّ حُجُومُ الْبَيْتِ لَا  
تُجَاوِزُهُ بَعْدَ الْمَضِيِّ عَنِّي بَلَّغْ يَعْلَمُونَ ثُمَّ قَالَ أَخْبَرْتُكَ بِأَوَّلِ أَعْمُورِهِ وَذَوِّ سُنَنِهَا فَلْيُؤَيِّسُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ  
أَوَّلَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَأَوَّلَ عَمُورِهِ الصَّلَاةَ وَزَوِّ سُنَنِهَا الْجِهَادُ قَالَ الْأَخِيرُ مِمَّا أَلْكَ كَلِمَةً قَالَ بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَأَخْبَرْتَنِي وَقَالَ  
كَهْ عَلَيَّ هَذَا قَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا لَمَوْجُرُونَ بِمَا تَكَلِّمُنَا فِيهِ فَقَالَ كَلِمَاتُ مَا يُؤَيِّسُ عَادُ وَهَاتِ كَلِمَاتُ النَّارِ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ  
فَقَالَ عَلَى مَنَاحِرِهِمْ لَا حِصَانُ لِلنَّسِيبِ هُمْ

On the authority of Muadh bin Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:  
I said, "O Messenger of Allah, tell me of an act which will take me into Paradise and will keep me away from the Hellfire." He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "You have asked me about a great matter, yet it is easy for him for whom Allah makes it easy: worship Allah, without associating any partners with Him; establish the prayer; pay the zakat; fast in Ramadhan; and make the pilgrimage to the House." Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Shall I not guide you towards the means of goodness? Fasting is a shield; charity wipes away sin as water extinguishes fire; and the praying of a man in the depths of the night." Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited: "[Those] who forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah's cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." [as-Sajdah, 16-17]  
Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Shall I not inform you of the head of the matter, its pillar and its peak?" I said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "The head of the matter is Islam, its pillar is the prayer and its peak is jihad." Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Shall I not tell you of the foundation of all of that?" I said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." So he took hold of his tongue and said, "Restrain this." I said, "O Prophet of Allah, will we be taken to account for what we say with it?" He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "May your mother be bereaved of you, O Muadh! Is there anything that throws people into the Hellfire upon their faces—or: on their noses—except the harvests of their tongues?"

Hadith 29

40 Hadith an-Nawawi

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com



# THE 450 LISTS

# ❧ The Lists ❧

## Scholarly

page 113

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.

## Political

page 123

These leaders possess high positions of power over substantial groups of people and exert influence from their status, reputation, or political clout.

## Administration of Religious Affairs

page 132

These agents of change are responsible for founding and/or directing institutions that influence the religious affairs of Muslims.

## Preachers & Spiritual Guides

page 139

Preachers rely on charisma to inspire millions through multimedia while spiritual guides traditionally teach through live study circles and individualised directives to their disciples.

## Philanthropy, Charity & Development

page 146

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.

## Social Issues

page 149

These individuals address various social issues such as health, education, women's rights, the environment, human rights and conflict resolution.

## Business

page 160

These entrepreneurs head and direct key organisations in the business world pushing innovation and financial development forward.

## Science & Technology

page 165

These are the main figures from the world of science and technology.

## Arts & Culture

page 170

These are artists and cultural ambassadors whose work has become part of people's daily lives.

## Qur'an Reciters

page 179

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.

## Media

page 181

In an age of impulsive news and innovative media, these personalities have garnered influence from their activity in the media world.

## Celebrities & Sports Stars

page 185

These instantly recognisable figures have a huge public following due to their prominence in popular culture and sport.

## Top Extremists

page 188

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.

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### ALGERIA

#### **Cherif, Mustapha**

Professor Mustapha Cherif is a philosopher and researcher specializing in international relations and dialogue between cultures. Cherif has written numerous works on religion, civilization and dialogue between cultures. He has held many senior academic and diplomatic positions including Algerian Minister of Higher Education and Ambassador to Egypt. He was awarded the UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture and the Ducci Foundation Peace Prize in 2013. He is also a member of the World Catholic-Muslim Forum and a permanent delegate at the Arab League.

### BAHRAIN

#### **Yaquby, Nizam**

Sheikh Nizam Yaquby was trained in the Islamic sciences in Bahrain and Makkah, studying under some eminent sheikhs, before going on to study at McGill University. He sits on a plethora of shariah advisory boards and has been a visiting lecturer at Harvard University. A highly sought-after expert with an immense breadth of experience with the Muslim community, Yaquby recently led a team which issued a fatwa supporting a cryptocurrency.

### IRAN

#### **Amoli, Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

#### **Dabashi, Professor Hamid**

Hamid Dabashi is the Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia University in New York. He has written extensively in major publications and peer-reviewed journals on a variety of topics including religion, literature, cinema and philosophy. He founded Dreams of a Nation, a Palestinian Film Project, dedicated to preserving and safeguarding Palestinian cinema. He is also a public speaker, a current affairs essayist (contributing opinion pieces regularly to the Al-Jazeera

website), and a staunch anti-war activist. His most recent book is *The End of Two Illusions: Islam after the West*.

#### **Damad, Ayatollah Dr Seyyed Mostafa Mohaghegh**

Damad is one of 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 shariah. He is a very well-respected scholar, and is currently a professor in the Faculty of Law at Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran. In October 2010, at the Pope's behest, he addressed the Synod in the Vatican, stressing the Muslim view towards Christians as one of friendship, trust, and mutual understanding. He was honoured as a prominent figure of humanities in Iran at the 8th Farabi International Award ceremony in 2017.

#### **Shirazi, Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim**

Grand Ayatollah Shirazi is a leading theologian teaching at the Qom Seminary, one of the two most important centres of learning for Twelver Shia. 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 Palestinians.

#### **Sobhani, Ayatollah Jafar**

Sobhani is a leading member of the Council of Mujtahids at the Qom Seminary, one of the two most important centres of learning in Twelver Shiism. He is the director of the Imam Sadiq Institute in Iran and was previously a member of the Society of Seminary Teachers at Qom. 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.

### IRAQ

#### **Fayadh, Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

#### **Al-Najafi, Grand Ayatollah Bashir**

Grand Ayatollah Bashir Al-Najafi is one of the four *maraji'* of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq, and



one of Iraq's most powerful Shia clerics. As a *marja'* of the Hawza in Najaf, Iraq's premier Shia institution, Najafi holds a position of immense authority. Najafi, originally from Pakistan, holds less sway amongst Iraq's population than the other *maraji'* but has significant clout in South Asia.

#### **Al-Qaradaghi, Professor Ali Mohyi Al**

Professor Al-Qaradaghi is the Secretary General of the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS) and Professor of Jurisprudence at Qatar University. He holds key positions in various Islamic Fiqh organizations as well as being on shariah supervisory boards for several banks. He is also President of the Board of Trustees of the University of Human Development in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, where he was born. He has written more than 30 works.

#### **Al-Sadr, Ayatollah Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail**

HE Ayatollah Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail Al-Sadr is the most senior Shia 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 commu-

nities has featured heavily in the Ayatollah's recent efforts.

### **JORDAN**

#### **Khasawneh, Sheikh Abdul Karim**

Sheikh Khasawneh has served Jordan in his capacity as a religious scholar and mufti in various roles. He is a former Mufti of the Jordanian Armed Forces, served as the Grand Mufti of Jordan between 2010-2017, and was reappointed to this post in 2019. Khasawneh is also a member of the Jordanian Ifta Council and a member of the board of the World Islamic Sciences and Education University (WISE).

### **LEBANON**

#### **Qabbani, Dr Mohammad Rashid**

Mohammad Rashid Qabbani is the former Grand Mufti of Lebanon and the country's leading Sunni scholar. Qabbani speaks out regularly against sectarianism and violence. He is an important voice in a region where tensions can easily escalate.

### **LIBYA**

#### **Nayed, Dr Aref Ali**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

## **The Muslim Council of Elders**

[www.muslim-elders.com](http://www.muslim-elders.com)

The Muslim Council of Elders is an independent international body that was established on 21 Ramadan 1435 Hijri (18 July 2014) in order to promote peace in Muslim communities. The goal of the Muslim Council of Elders is to create secure societies that respect knowledge and scholars; to encourage dialogue, tolerance, respect for others, and peace; to restore the role of scholars by using their expertise to improve muslim societies; and to help eliminate causes of fragmentation and promote conciliation.

The council consists of Muslim scholars, experts and dignitaries known for their wisdom, sense of justice, independence and moderateness. They work together to promote peace, to discourage infighting, and to address the sources of conflict, divisiveness, and fragmentation in Muslim communities.

Based in the United Arab Emirates' capital, Abu Dhabi, the council is the first institutional body that aims to bring the Islamic nation together by extinguishing the fire that threatens Islam's humanitarian values and tolerant principles, and putting an end to the sectarianism and violence that have plagued the Muslim world for decades.

The Muslim Council of Elders was formed as a result of the recommendations of The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, and it is a joint initiative by Grand Imam Sheikh Dr Ahmad al-Tayyib, the Sheikh of al-Azhar, and the forum's chairman scholar Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah.

## MOROCCO

### **Abdurrahman, Professor Dr Taha**

Taha Abdurrahman is a Moroccan philosopher famous for his work on the creation of an ethical humanistic modernism on the basis of the ethics and values of Islam. Abdurrahman 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 (IUMS). In 2020 he received the Necip Fazıl Award.

## OMAN

### **Al-Khalili, Sheikh Ahmad**

Sheikh Al-Khalili is the Grand Mufti of Oman. He was born, and lived, in Zanzibar until the end of the Al-Said rule (1964) and then moved to Oman along with many others of Omani heritage. He is a strong advocate for religious tolerance and works hard to ensure harmony between the different religious schools of thought in Oman.

## PALESTINE

### **Nusseibeh, Professor Sari**

Sari Nusseibeh comes from one of Jerusalem's oldest and most prominent families, having a 1300 year presence in the city. He has studied at various universities including Oxford and Harvard and is a professor of philosophy as well as being a leading public intellectual. He served as President of Al-Quds University in Jerusalem for more than 20 years.

### **Al-Tamimi, Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab**

Al-Tamimi is the Chief Islamic Justice of Palestine and a leading scholar. Popular as an outspoken thinker and leader on Palestinian-Israeli relations, Al-Tamimi is also the head of the Palestinian Centre for Religion and Civilization Dialogue.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **Al-Awni, Dr Hatim**

Dr Hatim Al-Awni is the General Supervisor of the International Committee for the Support of the Final Prophet (ICSFP). He has also served in a number of academic and political capacities, including the Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia for two separate terms. While his academic research includes doz-

ens of publications, perhaps his greatest contribution is the awakening of Salafi introspection in Saudi Arabia. His widely read articles have pointed out clear connections between militant extremism and core Salafi texts. He also writes extensively on rapprochement between Islamic schools of thought, particularly between Salafi and Traditionalist (Ash'ari and Maturidi) approaches.

### **Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Salih Bin Fawzan**

Sheikh Al-Fawzan is considered to be the most senior scholar of the Salafi movement in Saudi Arabia. He is a member of the Council of Senior Scholars and the Committee for Fatwa and Research. He has authored over 35 books and is one of the major muftis in the country.

### **Al-Madkhali, Sheikh Rabee ibn Haadi 'Umayr**

Sheikh Rabee 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. A former head of the Sunnah Studies Department at the Islamic University of Madinah, Al-Madkhali is a scholar who has authored over 30 works in the fields of Hadith and Islamic disciplines.

### **Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa**

Hasan Musa Al-Saffar is a Saudi Shia 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 increased Sunni-Shia hostilities in Iraq.

## SYRIA

### **Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed Ratib**

The son of a well-known Syrian religious scholar, Dr Al-Nabulsi has represented Syria all over the world in many Islamic conferences. Muslims know him through his 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. In addition to studying in his native Syria, he has also studied in Ireland and France.

### ERITREA

#### **Said, Sheikh Faid Mohammed**

Sheikh Faid Mohammed Said was raised in Eritrea, where he was educated by Sheikh Hamid, the Senior Judge of the Shariah Court in Asmara. He later moved to Madinah al-Munawwarah, where he continued his studies under Sheikh Atiyyah Mohammed Salim, the Resident Scholar of Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi and Senior Judge of Madinah. He has also completed a PhD from the University of Minnesota, USA. He is currently General Secretary of the Fatwa and Islamic Affairs commission and Imam and Khateeb of the Central Mosque in London.

### ETHIOPIA

#### **Idris, Hajji Omar**

Hajji Omar Idris is a mufti and leader of Ethiopian Muslims, who represent 40% of Ethiopia's population. Widely respected, he is a proponent of Muslim unity and was elected as President of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council in May 2019, marking the first peaceful transition of leadership since the council was formed. Hajji Idris is also President of the Fatwa and Dawa Councils.

### GAMBIA, THE

#### **Jah, Ambassador Professor Dr Omar**

Dr Jah is an important figure in the Gambian Muslim community and in Gambian scholarship on Islam. He was the former Gambian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Secretary of the Muslim Scholars Council of Gambia, and Acting Vice-Chancellor at the University of Gambia. After more than a decade at the University of Gambia, Dr Jah is now the Pro-Vice Chancellor at the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) Dhaka, Bangladesh, where he was appointed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

### MAURITANIA

#### **Al-Shanqiti, Muhammad Al-Hasan bin Al-Diddu**

Muhammad Al-Hasan bin Al-Diddu Al-Shanqiti is a Mauritanian Muslim scholar, author, writer, and poet. He is the President of O'lama Information Centre, and the President of Abdallah ibn Yasin University. He is also head of the country's Centre

for the Development of Scholars. In 2014 he was the Vice President of the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS). He has licenses (*ijazaat*) from various Islamic scholars authorizing him to teach all the major hadith collections.

### NIGERIA

#### **Zakzaky, Sheikh Ibraheem**

Sheikh Ibraheem is the leading force behind the most influential Shia movement in Nigeria and heads its Islamic Movement. The movement has witnessed rapid growth and is based on the model of Hezbollah, focusing on social services, education, charity, etc, but also including military training. In December 2015, the Nigerian Army raided his residence in Zaria, massacred hundreds of his followers, killed three of his sons and held him under state detention before being released. He was arrested again and acquitted, but still has travel restrictions in place.

### SOUTH AFRICA

#### **Esack, Farid**

Farid Esack is a traditionally trained scholar who is also a successful academic in modern universities. He has authored many famous written works on Islam and is arguably the world's leading Islamic Liberation theologian. He was appointed as gender equality commissioner by Nelson Mandela. Through the organization, The Call of Islam, Esack played a leading role in the struggle against apartheid. He is an advocate of interreligious solidarity, against all forms of injustice and has worked extensively to support Muslims infected with HIV. He is currently Head of the Department of Religion Studies at the University of Johannesburg and has been a professor at Harvard University. In 2018 he was awarded the Order of Luthuli (Silver), South Africa's highest civilian order for his contribution to scholarship and work for justice.

#### **Moosa, Professor Ebrahim**

Dr Ebrahim Moosa is the Mirza Family Professor of Islamic Thought and Muslim Societies in the Keough School of Global Affairs, the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, and in the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame. His interpretive and historical research on questions of tradition, ethics, and law includes two monographs as well as several edited and co-edited books. His prize-winning book, *Ghazali and the Poetics of Imagination*,



was awarded the Best First Book Prize in the History of Religions by the American Academy of Religion. He is the author of *What is a Madrasa?* (2015). Moosa is also regarded as a prominent public intellectual. In 2007 he was invited to deliver the King Hasan Lecture (Durus Hasaniyyah) to HM King Mohammed VI of Morocco in Arabic. He currently directs the Madrasa Discourses project, advancing scientific and theological literacy amongst young theologians (madrasah graduates) in South Asia.

## UGANDA

### **Mamdani, Professor Mahmood**

Dr Mamdani is the Herbert Lehman Professor of Government in the Departments of Anthropology and Political Science at Columbia University in the United States, and was Director of the Makerere Institute of Social Research in Kampala, Uganda. He is a leading public intellectual. He is the 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.

---

## *Asia*

---

## AZERBAIJAN

### **Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Hummat**

Sheikh Pashazade is the Grand Mufti of Azerbaijan, the elected Mufti of the Caucasus region, and the Chairman of the Religious Council of the Caucasus. Pashazade is also the world's only Sunni-Shia Grand Mufti, giving each group religious edicts (fatwas) according to their own legal methodology (*madhab*), reflecting Azerbaijan's Sunni-Shia mix. He co-chaired the World Summit of Religious Leaders, held in Azerbaijan in April 2010. He has been spearheading Azerbaijan's initiatives of promoting dialogue between faiths within the region and internationally.

## INDIA

**Nadwi, Dr Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen**  
Dr Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen Nadwi is the founding Vice Chancellor of Darul Huda Islamic

University, Kerala, India. He has authored a number of books, treatises, edited volumes, and translations in Arabic, English and Malayalam, spanning Qur'anic sciences, Islamic jurisprudence, Hadith, education, Sufism, Comparative Religion, Arabic Language and Literature, and Islamic History. He is the Editor-in-Chief of an international Journal of Islamic studies, and a member of regional (Kerala), national, and international organizations.

## INDONESIA

### **Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa**

Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa Bisri is widely revered as a religious scholar, poet, novelist, painter, and Muslim intellectual. A graduate of Al-Azhar, he is a former Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council and has strongly influenced the NU's (Nahdlatul Ulama) social and political development over the past 30 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.

### **Syamsuddin, Professor M Din**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

## MALAYSIA

### **Al-Akiti, Dato Dr Muhammad Afifi**

Dato Dr Afifi Al-Akiti is a Shafii scholar, trained theologian, and philologist. He is a Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, and teaches Islam at the Faculty of Theology, Oxford University's oldest faculty. He is the first-ever Malaysian to be appointed to such a position in this famous university. His areas of expertise are Islamic theology, law, finance, and science. Al-Akiti 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. From 2018 to 2020, he was appointed by the Conference of Rulers in Malaysia as Deputy Chairman to the High-Level Panel on the Federal Administration of Islam, a royal commission looking into institutional reforms at the federal level in Malaysia. He was awarded a Datukship by HRH The Sultan of Perak in 2012.

### **Bakar, Professor Osman**

Professor Osman Bakar is currently Al-Ghazali Chair of Epistemology and Civilizational Studies and Renewal at ISTAC-International Islamic University Malaysia and Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Science at the University of Malaya. He previously held posts at Universiti Brunei Darussalam and Georgetown University, Washington DC. Dr Bakar is author and editor of 43 books and numerous articles on various aspects of Islamic thought and civilization, especially Islamic science and inter-religious and inter-civilizational dialogue. Several of his writings, especially his best-selling work, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam*, have been translated into a dozen languages. He has served as advisor and consultant to a variety of international academic and professional organizations, including UNESCO, the Qatar Foundation, and The European Science Foundation. He was awarded a Datukship by the Malaysian King in 2000. He is a recipient of the 13th Farabi International Award (2022), presented by the Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

### **Kamali, Professor Mohammad Hashim**

Dr Kamali was Dean and Professor at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) and the International Islamic University in Malaysia. He then served as Founding CEO of the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies in Malaysia (2008-2022) and is currently Very Distinguished Fellow of that Institute. He is the world's leading expert on comparative studies between Islamic and modern law. Kamali has received many international awards in recognition of his intellectual and academic contributions towards serving Islam and Muslims. He was conferred with the Darjah Dato' Paduka Mahkota Perak (DPMP) Award (Title "Dato") from His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah in 2020. Kamali worked on the new constitutions of Afghanistan in 2003, of the Maldives in 2004 and of Somalia in 2010.

## **PAKISTAN**

### **Ahmed, Professor Akbar**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### **Hashmi, Dr Farhat**

Dr Farhat Hashmi is an influential Islamic teacher, public speaker, and scholar. She is a prominent name in the burgeoning field of the role of women in Islam. In addition to the academic aspects of Islamic teach-

ings, Hashmi also focuses on its relatable and practical aspects, thereby ensuring that her message resonates with a multitude of women across the globe. She holds a PhD in Hadith Sciences from the University of Glasgow, Scotland. She is the Founder of Al-Huda International, a non-profit institute founded in 1994. Al-Huda promotes Islamic learning and serves in the field of social welfare, and has branches across Pakistan as well as internationally.

### **Al-Qadri, Sheikh Dr Tahir**

Sheikh Tahir Al-Qadri is a Professor of law 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 has over five million social media followers. In March 2010, Qadri issued a 600-page fatwa declaring that terrorists and suicide bombers are unbelievers. He has continued to be outspoken against terrorists. He is based in Canada.

## **SINGAPORE**

### **Aljunied, Professor Khairudin (new)**

Professor Khairudin Aljunied is a globally recognized specialist in the field of intellectual history. He has held professorships and chair positions at Georgetown University, Columbia University, University of Malaya, University of Brunei Darussalam, and the National University of Singapore. His research examines the dynamic interactions between Southeast Asia and global Islam. A prolific scholar-activist who features regularly in the media and documentaries, he has published fourteen books with large range of international presses and his published books include: *Islam in Malaysia: A Entwined History* (OUP)

---

## *Europe*

---

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

### **Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa**

Dr Mustafa Ceric was schooled at the Gazi Husrev Beg Madrasa in Sarajevo, Al-Azhar University and the University of Chicago (PhD in Islamic Studies). He became an imam in Zagreb in 1987 and was the Grand Mufti of Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1999-2012. Dr Ceric is an advocate of cross-cultur-

al engagement as well as a peace activist. In 2006, he issued the 'Declaration of European Muslims' 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 2008, Dr Cerić led the Muslim delegation of the 'A Common Word' initiative to the Vatican, which included a meeting with the Pope. Dr Cerić is currently the President of the World Bosniak Congress as well as an active member of many local and international scholarly organizations and societies.

#### **Karić, Dr Enes**

Dr Enes Karić is a Professor of Qur'anic studies and history of the interpretation of the Qur'an at the Faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Sarajevo. He previously served as the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports with the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1994-1996. Dr Karić has written extensively on the Qur'an and Islamic studies in English and Bosnian, and has delivered lectures worldwide. He has also won literary awards for his novels which have been translated into many languages.

#### **Mahmutćehajić, Professor Dr Rusmir**

Dr Rusmir Mahmutćehajić is a Bosnian academic, author, and former statesman. Considered one of Bosnia's leading intellectuals and public figures, he is the foremost advocate of the idea of a diverse Bosnia. A scholar of the Muslim intellectual tradition and a contributor to contemporary Muslim thought and the liberal interpretation of Islam, Professor Mahmutćehajić has served his country as Deputy Prime Minister and as Energy Minister through the process of independence and much of the war (1991-95). For the past 15 years, he has been President of International Forum Bosnia, which is dedicated to the development of critical intelligence and a plural society in Bosnia. He is the author of more than 20 books in Bosnian, some 12 of which have been published in multiple languages, and author of several hundred academic articles and essays.

#### **RUSSIA**

##### **Gaynutdin, Mufti Sheikh Ravil**

Mufti Sheikh Ravil Gaynutdin 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 Coordination with Religious Organizations, he is a key figure in relations between the Kremlin and Russia's Muslim population.

#### **SWITZERLAND**

##### **Ramadan, Dr Tariq**

Dr Ramadan is a European Muslim intellectual and author about Islam in public life. He was a professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University, and holds academic positions at other institutions worldwide. In February 2018, Ramadan was accused of raping two women (a third charge was dropped when the testimony of one of his accusers was discredited) and was arrested in that same month pending his trial. In 2020 he was charged with raping two more women. The French justice system has come under scrutiny for the way it treated Ramadan, denying him bail and putting him in solitary confinement where his physical health deteriorated (he suffers from multiple sclerosis). In June 2023, he was cleared of rape charges and sexual coercion by a Swiss court, ending a six-year-long legal struggle.

#### **TÜRKİYE**

##### **Karaman, Professor Dr Hayrettin**

Dr Karaman is one of the most prominent scholars of Islam in Türkiye, and the pre-eminent scholar of Islamic law (shariah) there. He publishes popular 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 Türkiye's premier university, Marmara University. He left this position at the height of the headscarf controversy in 2001.

#### **UNITED KINGDOM**

##### **Abdel Haleem, Professor Muhammad**

Professor Muhammad Abdel Haleem is a much-loved Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies at SOAS, University of London, and Editor of the *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*. He was awarded an OBE in 2008 in recognition of his services to Arabic literature and interfaith understanding. Born in Egypt, Abdel Haleem memorized the Qur'an (this was a prerequisite for entry to Al-Azhar University) before starting his further education. He has many publications including a widely acclaimed translation of the Qur'an.



### **Hellyer, Dr Hisham**

Dr Hisham A (HA) Hellyer is currently a fellow at the Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge, and a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace scholar. Elected as a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and the Royal Society of Arts for his scholarly and public impact over two decades in geopolitics, security studies, political economy, and belief, he has held positions at Harvard, Warwick University, Brookings, and the American University in Cairo. Trained in the Islamic canon, Shaykh Hisham was previously appointed as Council Member of the British Board of Scholars and Imams, the first 'senior scholar' of the renowned Azzawia Institute, and the first professorial fellow at Cambridge Muslim College. His books include *Muslims of Europe: the 'Other' Europeans, A Revolution Undone: Egypt's Road Beyond Revolt, A Sublime Path: the Sufi Way of the Makkan Sages, and The Islamic Tradition and the Human Rights Discourse*.

### **Mangera, Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf**

Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera is a British Muslim scholar educated in both the Islamic and Western traditions. He has memorized the Qur'an and studied with accomplished scholars in the UK, South Africa, India, and Syria. He holds a PhD from SOAS and has served as an imam in the UK and USA. He is the founder of Whitethread Institute, a post-graduate institute for Islamic scholars. He works on scholarly publications through White Thread Press ([www.whitethreadpress.com](http://www.whitethreadpress.com)) with many of his lectures being available on [www.zamzamacademy.com](http://www.zamzamacademy.com).

### **Nadwi, Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram**

Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram Nadwi is one of the most important Islamic scholars in the Western world today. He has a doctorate in Arabic Language and has authored and translated over 30 titles on Arabic, jurisprudence, Qur'an, and Hadith. He travels extensively, and his courses and lectures have a worldwide following. His biographical dictionary of women scholars in Islamic history (over 40 volumes) is now being published by al-Rabitah al-Muhammadiyah li al-ulama in Rabat. A revised edition of the English translation of the introductory volume *Al-Muhaddithat* was published in 2013. He is the subject of the best-selling book: *If the Oceans Were Ink: An Unlikely Friendship and a Journey to the Heart of the Qur'an* (2015).

### **Pirzada, Shaykh Muhammad Imdad Hussain**

Sheikh Muhammad Imdad Hussain Pirzada has served the global Muslim community for over half a century. He is a leading voice in literature, education, the training of scholars, and community and charity work. Following his acclaimed 5-volume commentary, *Qur'an: The Sublime Word in Arabic, Urdu and English*, and his 10-volume commentary, *Bukhari: The Sublime Tradition*, for which he was honoured in 2019 at the Imam Bukhari Complex in Samarkand, his latest research is pioneering in the field of leadership and *seerah* literature. Through Jamia Al-Karam, the institution and school he founded in 1985, hundreds of male and female British Muslim scholars have studied under his tutelage, who today serve as imams in more than 150 mosques in major cities as well as chaplains, teachers and community leaders in the UK and across Europe. He is founder of Muslim Charity, a relief and development NGO working in over 17 countries, and he is President of the World Association for Al-Azhar Graduates (UK).

### **Sardar, Ziauddin**

Sardar has been described as "Britain's own Muslim Polymath" by *The Independent* newspaper. He is an award-winning writer who specializes in Muslim thought, futurology, science and cultural relations. He has authored and edited over 50 books and written for various journals (*Nature, New Scientist*) and newspapers. He has worked on numerous ground-breaking initiatives representing British Asian and Muslim communities, producing programmes for national TV. He has taught at UK universities and worked overseas as advisor to Anwar Ibrahim (then Education Minister of Malaysia) and in Saudi Arabia. He currently edits the *Critical Muslim* and has recently established the Centre for Post-normal Policy and Futures Studies.

---

## *Oceania*

---

### **NEW ZEALAND**

#### **Hayward, Professor Joel**

Dr Hayward has taught Islamic Studies in many elite institutions, including the Royal Air Force College (UK), of which he served as Dean for five years, and the National Defence College of the UAE. He weaves together classical Islamic knowledge and methodologies and the source-critical Western historical meth-

# A Common Word

www.acommonword.com

The '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 neighbour. 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 neighbour—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 ten 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, and university courses in Jordan, the Vatican, the USA (Yale University, Georgetown University and the College of William and Mary, Fuller Theological Seminary, ISNA, Oregon, Virginia, South Carolina, New Orleans), the UK (Cambridge University, Oxford University, Heythrop College and Lambeth Palace), Oman, Malaysia, Egypt, Sudan, Pakistan, the UAE, the Brookings Institute in Qatar, the Mediterranean Dialogue of Cultures, Germany (the Munich School of Philosophy), the World Council of Churches in Switzerland, the Philippines, and Australia.
- Being the subject of books, articles, PhDs and over 74 dissertations and reports.
- Founding the regular [every 3 years] Catholic-Muslim

Forum, which was first held at the Vatican in 2008, at the Baptism Site, Jordan, in 2011, and at the Vatican in November, 2014.

- Giving rise to a variety of other events, activities, initiatives and even legislative bills.

Thus HH Pope Benedict XVI, said of it (during the First Seminar of the Catholic-Muslim Forum held at the Vatican, 4-6 November 2008:

"The Open Letter 'A Common Word between Us and you' has received numerous responses and has given rise to dialogue, specific initiatives and meetings, aimed at helping us to know one another more deeply and to grow in esteem for our shared values."

Equally, HG Dr Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said of it (in 2010):

"The appearance of the A Common Word [Open Letter] of 2007 was a landmark in Muslim-Christian relations and it has a unique role in stimulating a discussion at the deepest level across the world."

Insofar as Muslim-Christian relations are concerned, Professor Miroslav Volf of Yale University said of it (in 2011):

"The A Common Word Initiative is the most significant initiative in Muslim-Christian relations since *Nostra Aetate* of the Second Vatican Council."

And in so far as Muslim initiatives towards Christians are concerned, Professor David F. Ford (Regius Professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge, U. K. and Director of the Cambridge Interfaith Program) said of it (in 2011):

"The Open Letter A Common Word Between Us and You (2007) was probably the single most important initiative ever taken by Muslim scholars and authorities towards Christians."

The A Common Word initiative was awarded the UK's Association of Muslim Social Scientists Building Bridges Award of 2008; Prince Ghazi, Habib Ali Al-Jifri and Grand Mufti Mustafa Ceric were awarded Germany's Eugen Biser Award for it in 2008, and Prince Ghazi was awarded the St Augustine Award for Interreligious Dialogue in the Mediterranean (Milan, Italy, 2012) and the Interfaith Harmony and Tolerance Prize by the International Islamic University of Malaysia, Jamia Ma'din and the National Unity and Integration Department, Malaysia.

od to make innovative yet carefully reasoned sense of complex historical issues that are still important in today's world. His books on Islam include *Warfare in the Qur'an* (2012), *War is Deceit: An Analysis of a Contentious Hadith* (2017), *Civilian Immunity in Foundational Islamic Strategic Thought* (2019), and *The Leadership of Muhammad ﷺ: A Historical Reconstruction* (2021). The latter won the illustrious prize of Best International Non-Fiction Book at the 2021 Sharjah International Book Awards. His latest book (2022) is *The Warrior Prophet: Muhammad ﷺ and War*.

North America

CANADA

Mattson, Dr Ingrid

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bewley, Aisha

Aisha Bewley is a scholar, author, writer and one of the most prolific and accomplished translators of classical Islamic works from Arabic to English. Since converting to Islam in 1968, she has spent the decades faithfully learning the Islamic tradition and making available its key texts to the global English-speaking Muslim community, often in collaboration with her husband. She was born 1948 in the United States, obtained an MA in Near Eastern Languages from the University of California and then spent a year at the American University in Cairo. She started her traditional Islamic learning in a Dar al-Ulum and contin-

ued her journey following the teachings of Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Habib of Meknes (passed away 1972) under the late Sheikh Abdalqadir al-Murabit (passed away 2021).

Jackson, Dr Sherman

Dr Jackson is the King Faisal Chair in Islamic Thought and Culture and Professor of Religion and American Studies and Ethnicity, and the Director of the Center for Islamic Thought, Culture and Practice (CITCAP) 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 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 member 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.

Qadhi, Dr Yasir

Dr Yasir Qadhi is one of very few professors of Islamic studies who is also a classically trained scholar (Yale University and the Islamic University of Madinah respectively). Currently he is the Dean of The Islamic Seminary of America, the Resident Scholar of the Memphis Islamic Center, and a professor at Rhodes College, Memphis, TN. He has established a reputation as a cleric who appreciates the cultural impact that Muslims have to face in the US. He is also renowned for reaching out to media outlets and mainstream Americans of different religions to promote a better understanding of Islam, and to challenge stereotypes about Muslims in the US.



My Lord, I have indeed wronged myself, so forgive me!  
The Story, 16



---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### IRAN

#### **Ebtekar, Dr Masoumeh**

Dr Ebtekar was the first female Vice President of Iran in 1997. A scientist, journalist, and politician, she frequently writes on environmental, political, social, and women's issues in Persian and English. She is one of the founding members of the reformist Islamic Iran Participation Front and served as Head of the Environmental Protection Organization under Rouhani and Khatami. Her accolades include the Energy Globe Foundation Honorary Lifetime Achievement Award, being named one of the seven 2006 Champions of the Earth by the United Nations Environment Program, and one of 50 environmental leaders by *The Guardian* newspaper. In 2016, Dr Ebtekar was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Political Science by the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, Korea. In August 2017, Ebtekar was appointed as Women Affairs' Vice President.

#### **Jafari, Major General Mohammad Ali**

General Mohammad Ali Jafari has been the Chief Commander of the Iranian Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (also known as the Revolutionary Guard) since 2007. It is a 300,000 strong elite faction of the Iranian armed forces separate from the armies that report 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 Shia movements abroad such as Hezbollah and the Mahdi Army. Because of this, Jafari has a significant degree of influence in Iraq and Lebanon.

#### **Raisi, President Ebrahim**

Raisi (Sayyid Ebrahim Raisolsadati) is the President of Iran. He is seen as more conservative than his predecessor and ran largely on an anti-corruption ticket. Raised in a clerical family, he attended the famous Qom seminary and also attained a PhD in law. He served as Deputy Chief Justice, Attorney General and Chief Justice, before winning the 2021 Iranian presidential election. He has been accused by Amnesty International of overseeing the executions of

political prisoners in the 80s and 90s and is currently under US sanctions. Raisi has frequently pressed for economic reform, such as the development of the agriculture sector over the commercial sector, tripling the monthly state benefits, and tackling corruption and increasing employment. He is also a strong advocate of women's rights, as well as the arts and culture sector.

### IRAQ

#### **Barzani, Masoud**

Barzani entered the political arena at the young age of 16 under the wing of his late father and became the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party in 1979. He played a major role in shaping the new Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. He has been the main force fighting DA'ISH and is adamant about establishing an independent Kurdish state. He was President of the Iraqi Kurdish Region from 2005-2017, but had to resign because of fierce regional opposition to the referendum he held in September 2017 for Kurdish independence (there was overwhelming support for an independent Kurdistan). There are approximately 6 million Kurds living within the Kurdish region in Iraq, 15 million in Türkiye, 8 million in Iran, and less than 2 million in Syria.

#### **Al-Sudani, Mohammed Shayya' (new)**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### ISRAEL

#### **Salah, Sheikh Raed**

Sheikh Raed Salah is 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 is frequently arrested and imprisoned by the Israeli government and, in February 2020, a court in Israel sentenced Salah to 28 months in prison for 'inciting to terror', much of which was spent in solitary confinement. In December 2021, he was released from prison after having served 16 months of his sentence.

# The Marrakesh Declaration

www.marrakeshdeclaration.org

## In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate

Executive Summary of the Marrakesh Declaration  
on the Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly  
Muslim Majority Communities

25th-27th January 2016

WHEREAS, conditions in various parts of the Muslim World have deteriorated dangerously due to the use of violence and armed struggle as a tool for settling conflicts and imposing one's point of view;

WHEREAS, this situation has also weakened the authority of legitimate governments and enabled criminal groups to issue edicts attributed to Islam, but which, in fact, alarmingly distort its fundamental principles and goals in ways that have seriously harmed the population as a whole;

WHEREAS, this year marks the 1,400th anniversary of the Charter of Medina, a constitutional contract between the Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, and the people of Medina, which guaranteed the religious liberty of all, regardless of faith;

WHEREAS, hundreds of Muslim scholars and intellectuals from over 120 countries, along with representatives of Islamic and international organisations, as well as leaders from diverse religious groups and nationalities, gathered in Marrakesh on this date to reaffirm the principles of the Charter of Medina at a major conference;

WHEREAS, this conference was held under the auspices of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI of Morocco, and organised jointly by the Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs in the Kingdom of Morocco and the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies based in the United Arab Emirates;

AND NOTING the gravity of this situation afflicting Muslims as well as peoples of other faiths throughout the world, and after thorough deliberation and discussion, the convened Muslim scholars and intellectuals:

DECLARE HEREBY our firm commitment to the principles articulated in the Charter of Medina, whose provisions contained a number of the principles of constitutional contractual citizenship, such as freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defence, as well as principles of justice and equality before the law; and that,

The objectives of the Charter of Medina provide a suitable framework for national constitutions in countries with Muslim majorities, and the United Nations Charter and related documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are in harmony with the Charter of Medina, including consideration for public order.

NOTING FURTHER that deep reflection upon the various crises afflicting humanity underscores the inevitable and urgent need for cooperation among all religious groups, we

AFFIRM HEREBY that such cooperation must be based on a "Common Word," requiring that such cooperation must go beyond mutual tolerance and respect, to providing full protection for the rights and liberties to all religious groups in a civilised manner that eschews coercion, bias, and arrogance.

BASED ON ALL OF THE ABOVE, we hereby:

Call upon Muslim scholars and intellectuals around the world to develop a jurisprudence of the concept of "citizenship" which is inclusive of diverse groups. Such jurisprudence shall be rooted in Islamic tradition and principles and mindful of global changes.

Urge Muslim educational institutions and authorities to conduct a courageous review of educational curricula that addresses honestly and effectively any material that instigates aggression and extremism, leads to war and chaos, and results in the destruction of our shared societies;

Call upon politicians and decision makers to take the political and legal steps necessary to establish a constitutional contractual relationship among its citizens, and to support all formulations and initiatives that aim to fortify relations and understanding among the various religious groups in the Muslim World;

Call upon the educated, artistic, and creative members of our societies, as well as organisations of civil society, to establish a broad movement for the just treatment of religious minorities in Muslim countries and to raise awareness as to their rights, and to work together to ensure the success of these efforts.

Call upon the various religious groups bound by the same national fabric to address their mutual state of selective amnesia that blocks memories of centuries of joint and shared living on the same land; we call upon them to rebuild the past by reviving this tradition of conviviality, and restoring our shared trust that has been eroded by extremists using acts of terror and aggression;

Call upon representatives of the various religions, sects and denominations to confront all forms of religious bigotry, vilification, and denigration of what people hold sacred, as well as all speech that promote hatred and bigotry; AND FINALLY,

AFFIRM that it is unconscionable to employ religion for the purpose of aggressing upon the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries.

Marrakesh

January 2016 , 27th

## JORDAN

### **Abu Rashta, Ata**

Ata Abu Rashta is the global leader of the Islamic political party Hizb ut-Tahrir. Having worked closely with the organization's founder, Taqiuddin Al-Nabhani, Abu Rashta gained prominence in Jordan during the First Gulf War when he contested the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In 2003, he became the leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Hizb-ut Tahrir is popular in the Levant, the former Soviet Union, South and Southeast Asia, and Western Europe.

### **HRH Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah**

Named Crown Prince in 2009, HRH Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah is the eldest son of His Majesty King Abdullah II, making him heir to the throne. HRH holds the rank of First Lieutenant in the Jordanian Armed Forces, and has accompanied his father on several military and political occasions. His efforts to develop the Jordanian youth community started with the Hageq (achieve) initiative, an activity targeting school-aged children. In 2015, Crown Prince Hussein became the youngest person to chair a UN Security Council meeting and in 2017 he delivered Jordan's address at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

## KUWAIT

### **HH Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**

HH Emir Sheikh Nawaf served as Crown Prince from 2006 until the passing of his half-brother, HH Emir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in September 2020. Prior to that he served as Home Minister for a decade and then Defence Minister from 1988. After the Iraqi invasion of 1991, he served as Social Affairs and Labour Minister. He is now 83 years old and his ascension was quite straightforward, as was the selection of the new Crown Prince, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

## LIBYA

### **Haftar, Khalifa**

Khalifa Haftar rose to prominence after the uprising against the late General Gaddafi, and was the person who announced that the Libyan government had been suspended. A leading figure in Libya's military establishment, Haftar became a major general in the Libyan Army in 2011. Haftar's Libyan National Army is at odds with the UN recognized government

and seized control of Libyan oil ports in 2018. The UAE, Egypt, and Russia continue to support Haftar whereas the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) is headed by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh and is supported by Türkiye and Qatar.

## OMAN

### **HRH Sultan Haitham bin Tariq**

Sultan Haitham bin Tariq ascended the throne on 11 January 2020 after the passing of his cousin, Sultan Qaboos bin Said. Previously, Sultan Haitham served as Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as Minister of Heritage and Culture from 2002, a position he held until his inauguration as Sultan of Oman. In his first speech to his nation, Sultan Haitham promised to "follow the path of Sultan Qaboos and build upon it." Sultan Haitham is a passionate sportsman and was the first to head the Oman Football Association in the early 1980s. He is also chairman of the "2040 Oman Vision" and was described by *The Economist* as "outward-looking and Western-oriented".

## PALESTINE

### **Abbas, HE President Mahmoud**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### **Mashal, Khaled**

Khaled Mashal was Hamas' politburo chief from 2004-2017. His term began after the Israeli assassinations of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and Abdel Aziz Al-Rantisi in 2004 and ended in a peaceful transition to Ismail Haniyah. Mashal saw the organization through multiple attempts at a roadmap to peace and a major Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip. Mashal 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. Mashal has been one of the most direct and candid leaders in dialogue and confrontation with Israel and this has garnered international recognition. In 2021, Hamas elected Mashal for a four-year term as head of its office in the diaspora.



## SUDAN

### **Abdalla, Asma Mohamed**

Asma Mohamed Abdalla became Sudan's first female Minister of Foreign Affairs in early September 2019 in Sudan's Transitional Cabinet. Previously she had served as ambassador and worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before being dismissed after the 1989 coup d'état which brought Omar Al-Bashir to power. She left Sudan and lived in exile, doing work for IS-ESCO and UNICEF amongst other organizations. During the 2018–19 Sudanese protests, Abdalla joined the Forces of Freedom and Change.

## SYRIA

### **Al-Assad, HE President Bashar**

Al-Assad is President of the Syrian Arab Republic. Since 2011, the civil war between the regime and an assortment of groups (loosely gathered under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army) has resulted in approximately 450,000 people being killed, six million displaced internally, and about five million having fled the country in a humanitarian crisis which is also having a destabilizing influence on neighbouring countries. In May 2021, Al-Assad won a fourth term in office with 95.1% of the votes. He attended the Arab League summit in Jeddah in May 2023 after a 12-year ban, showing that he has reestablished relations with most Arab countries.

## TUNISIA

### **Saied, HE President Kais**

President Kais Saied ran as an independent candidate with broad political support and popular appeal to win the presidential election in 2019. With economic conditions not improving, protests were dealt with in a heavy handed manner, and then in July 2021 Saied suspended parliament and dismissed the Prime Minister. A year later a new constitution was adopted through a referendum (30% turnout) and December 2022 elections recorded the lowest turnout in history (9%). Most fear that Tunisia is returning to pre-Arab Spring rule.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### **HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum**

HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum is the constitutional monarch of Dubai, as well as the Prime Minister and Vice President of the United

Arab Emirates. In 1995, as Crown Prince of Dubai, his chief objective was to make Dubai a resort and business destination. To that end, he helped develop the Palm Islands, the Burj Al-Arab hotel, the Burj Khalifa skyscraper, the Dubai World Cup and the Godolphin Stables. He has also launched multiple charity initiatives from Dubai, such as 'Dubai Cares', which has reached over 18 million beneficiaries in 53 countries since its inception in 2007.

### **Al-Qassimi, Sheikha Lubna**

Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid bin Sultan Al-Qassimi is the UAE's Minister of State for Tolerance. She was the first woman to hold a ministerial post in the UAE, where she served as the Minister of Economy and Planning from 2000-2004. In 2000, she founded Tejari, the Middle East's first business-to-business online marketplace which now has franchises in Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. In March 2014, she was appointed President of Zayed University.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

## NIGER

### **Bazoum, HE President Mohamed**

President Bazoum was elected President of Niger in 2021 marking the first time in Niger's history that a peaceful transition had taken place from one democratically elected leader to another. He is a seasoned politician who has served multiple positions including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He founded the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism in the 1990s and was elected to the National Assembly in 1993. He is the first Diffa Arab president of Niger. Niger has a population of approximately 24 million, with 99% Muslim. In July 2023 a coup d'état saw General Abdourahamane Tchiani seize control of the country and put President Bazoum under house arrest. Bazoum remains defiant and has international support.

## NIGERIA

### **Tinubu, HE President Chief Bola Ahmed (new)**

Chief Bola Ahmed Tinubu became the 16th president of Nigeria after winning presidential elections in February 2023. A member of the Social Democratic Party since 1991, he was forced into exile from 1994-1998 when Nigeria fell to a dictatorship. Upon his return he was elected the governor of Lagos State

from 1999 to 2007, initiating new road constructions amongst other achievements. After leaving office in 2007, he played a key role in the formation of the All Progressives Congress and supported former President Buhari in his successful 2014 and 2019 campaigns. Since becoming President himself he has taken significant actions such as removing fuel subsidies, suspending the governor of the central bank and retiring 150 major generals in an effort to reduce the power of the military over state security.

## SOMALIA

### **Adam, Fawzia Yusuf Haji**

Fawzia's influence stems from the fact that she was the first woman to be named Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia (2012-2014). She had a significant role in revitalizing the Somali economy by recovering national assets that were frozen, as well as signing an agreement with Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan for bilateral cooperation. A similar agreement was also signed with China. Fawzia launched a TV channel named RAAD TV aimed at providing a better image of the unstable and war-torn Somalia. She ran in the 2022 Somali presidential election, but lost to Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

---

## *Asia*

---

## AFGHANISTAN

### **Baradar, Abdul Ghani**

Baradar is the political head of the Taliban and Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs of Afghanistan. Baradar fought against the Soviet invasion until their withdrawal in 1989, then set up a madrasah in Kandahar with his former commander, Mullah Mohammad Omar, which produced the Taliban. During the Taliban's first time in power (1996-2001), Baradar held a number of key posts, including that of Deputy Minister of Defence. In 2010, Baradar was imprisoned in Pakistan and only released after the Trump Administration started talks with the Taliban in 2018. He then became the Taliban's chief ambassador and spoke directly to President Trump.

## BANGLADESH

### **Wazed, HE Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

## CHINA

### **Kadeer, Rebiya**

Kadeer is the de facto leader of the movement for social justice for the 15-million-strong Uyghur ethnic-population of China. She was formerly a successful businesswoman and philanthropist in China but was imprisoned in 1999 for leaking state secrets and now lives in exile in the United States. Before her arrest, Kadeer was running the 1,000 Families Mother's Project which helped Uyghur women start businesses. She now works closely with both the World Uyghur Congress and the Uyghur American Association. She is well-known for her work in Europe and North America publicizing the plight of the Uyghur ethnic group, and is partially responsible for raising the issue both in China and abroad. The Chinese government sees Kadeer as an agitator.

## INDIA

### **Farooq, Dr Mohammad Umar**

Dr Farooq inherited the 14th Mirwaiz (traditional preacher of Muslims in Kashmir) in 1990 at the age of 17 after the assassination of his father. At the young age of 20 he became Chairman and Founder of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, a grassroots coalition of pro-freedom parties in Jammu & Kashmir. He has raised the Kashmiri problem at the UN, the EU parliament, and the IOC, advocating dialogue with both India and Pakistan so that the aspirations of the Kashmiri people may be realized. After being placed under house arrest in August 2019, he was eventually granted permission to leave in September 2023 and his attendance at prayers elicited an emotional response.

## INDONESIA

### **Parawansa, Khofifah Indar**

Parawansa took office as the 14th Governor of East Java in 2019. She had previously served as the Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives and the Minister of Social Affairs. She has been a strong supporter of inter-faith unity and also led a campaign to reduce red-light districts by offering alternative jobs. She was also chairwoman of the Muslimat, a women's group affiliated to Nahdlatul Ulama. She has 2 million followers on social media and is considered a presidential candidate for 2024.

### **Subianto, Lt Gen Prabowo**

Lt Gen Prabowo Subianto was appointed Defence Minister in 2019. He ran for the vice presidency in 2009, and for president in 2014 and 2019, where he was defeated both times by Joko Widodo. In 2019 his supporters (he has been General Chair of the Gerindra Party since 2014) protested the results leading to violence, but the supreme court decided in Widodo's favour. Prabowo's military past has prompted mixed reactions from various organizations.

### **Sukarnoputri, Megawati**

Megawati Sukarnoputri is the daughter of Indonesia's first President, Sukarno. She served as Vice President from 1999-2001 and then became Indonesia's first female president (from 2001 to 2004) and the fourth woman to be the leader of a Muslim-majority nation. She is the current head of the PDI-P party.

## **KAZAKHSTAN**

### **Tokayev, HE President Kassym-Jomart**

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev became the second President of Kazakhstan in 2019, ending the 28-year rule of Nursultan Nazarbayev. President Tokayev has gradually introduced reform and is leading the country into a more democratic and transparent nation. January 2022 saw some violent outbreaks, but a June referendum has given the President the mandate to push ahead with reforms. Significant reforms include limiting the presidential rule to one seven-year term (the previous president was re-elected five times) and reverting to the original name of the capital city, Astana. It had been renamed Nur-Sultan in 2019 in honour of the first President. In November, 2022, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev won the early presidential election with 81.31% of the vote and was re-elected.

## **MALAYSIA**

### **Mohamad, HE Mahathir**

Mahathir is a dominant political figure. In his first tenure as Prime Minister (1981-2003) he won five consecutive general elections. He is noted for his support for liberal Muslim values and has established Islamic institutions such as the International Islamic University of Malaysia. Mahathir has, however, been criticized for his record on civil liberties and for the trials and tribulations that his former Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, endured after being sacked by Mahathir in 1998. After retiring for many years, Mahathir registered a new political party in 2017

and joined the coalition Pakatan Harapan (Pact of Hope) which went on to win the 2018 elections with Mahathir becoming, at 94 years old, the world's oldest sitting head of government.

### **Wan Ismail, Datuk Seri Wan Azizah**

Datuk Seri Wan Azizah Wan Ismail was the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia (the first woman to serve in that position) from 2018-2020. She served as a government doctor for 14 years before deciding to support her husband, Anwar Ibrahim, when he was appointed the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia in 1993. Since then, her political journey has been largely defined by his struggles. Following the dismissal and arrest of her husband in 1998, Wan Azizah moved full-time into politics, forming political parties, alliances and winning seats at general elections. She has been a Member of Parliament (MP) for Bandar Tun Razak since November 2022.

## **PAKISTAN**

### **Khan, Imran**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### **Munir, General Syed Asim (new)**

Syed Asim Munir Ahmed Shah is an army general and the current Chief of Army Staff. A descendant of a religious and scholarly family, Asim is also known as the first army chief in the history of Pakistan to be a Hafiz Quran (memorized the entire Quran). He served as chief of both premier military intelligence agencies of Pakistan although his tenure at ISI was short-lived after a falling out with then-Prime Minister Imran Khan. He must navigate unprecedented national criticism of the army's influence on Pakistan's democracy as the country goes through turbulent times politically and economically.

### **Sharif, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz**

Shehbaz Sharif became the 23rd Prime Minister of Pakistan in April 2022 after a no-confidence motion against former Prime Minister Imran Khan. Sharif is the brother of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and has himself had a long political career, being the President of the Pakistan Muslim League and serving as the Chief Minister of Punjab three times (1997, 2007 and 2013). He was arrested in 2020 on charges of corruption and money laundering and spent a few months in jail before being granted bail in April 2021. In August 2023 a caretaker Prime Minister replaced Sharif as the country prepared itself for national elections.



### **Sharif, Nawaz**

Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif served as Prime Minister of Pakistan on three occasions: from 1990-1993, from 1997-1999 and from 2013-2017. On the last occasion he was forced to resign over corruption charges and in 2018 was convicted of corruption. He received a ten-year sentence and spent two months in prison before the Pakistan High Court suspended the sentence (the same happened to his daughter, Maryam). Sharif was then found guilty of fresh corruption charges and an accountability court sentenced him to seven years in prison and fined him \$25 million. He was allowed to leave for London to receive medical treatment in November 2019 and has yet to return to Pakistan, but he is still seen as one of the most significant players in Pakistani politics.

## **PHILIPPINES**

### **Gutoc-Tomawis, Samira**

Samira Gutoc-Tomawis is a strong advocate for Muslims in Mindanao. She has particularly strong support in Marawi City, where she runs relief missions to civilians still suffering the results of the five-month battle in Marawi between government forces and DA'ISH supporters in 2017. She has been critical of the delayed rehabilitation of the city ravaged by the war and the continued imposition of martial law in Mindanao. She served as a member of the Regional Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and a member of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission. In 2021, she joined Aksyon Demokratiko's national executive board, but was unsuccessful in her bid for the senate in 2022.

### **Misuari, Nur**

Nur Misuari began his campaign 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. Misuari was charged in connection to the deadly 20-day attack in Zamboanga city in September 2013, which left nearly 200 people dead; but in 2016, Misuari was granted a temporary suspension of his arrest and asked for his help in the peace negotiations in Mindanao. In late 2019, President Duterte appointed Nur Misuari as Special Economic Envoy on Islamic Affairs to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Despite recent pressure to arrest Misuari, he continues to work toward peace with the Philippines' government

and has offered to deploy MNLF fighters to help defeat the DA'ISH-backed Maute Group.

## **SINGAPORE**

### **Rasheed, Zainul Abidin**

Rasheed is Singapore's Ambassador to Kuwait and the Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Middle East. In 2017, he was appointed to the Board of Trustees at the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore. He previously served as Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for Singapore and mayor of the city-state's North Eastern district. Rasheed's activities focus on Singapore's diplomatic relations with the Muslim world and sharing Singapore's expertise in inter-cultural and inter-religious relations with nations that have substantial Muslim populations. Rasheed is widely known domestically, having held numerous positions of leadership throughout his career in journalism, organized labour, and representation of Singapore's large Muslim community.

## **UZBEKISTAN**

### **Mirziyoyev, HE President Shavkat**

In 2023 President Shavkat Mirziyoyev won his third (although officially it is his first under the new constitution which limits presidents to two terms in office) election, a seven-year term, winning 87% of the vote. Since succeeding the authoritarian Islam Karimov (who ruled for 25 years before he died in office), President Shavkat has introduced gradual reform including restricting the power of the security services, encouraging foreign trade and investment and allowing more political freedom. He has looked to better relations with neighbouring countries as well as the USA, China and Russia. Shavkat served as Prime Minister from 2013-2016 before being elected President.

---

## *Europe*

---

## **KOSOVO**

### **Osmani-Sadriu, President Vjosa**

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu was elected the 5th President of Kosovo in 2021, running on an anti-corruption platform. A law graduate, she has been involved in politics from an early age including being elected

to the Assembly of Kosovo, holding the position of Speaker and also serving as acting president. She experienced the effects of war in her hometown and went on to help prepare the legal work for Kosovo's independence. As President she is willing to normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

## NETHERLANDS

### Aboutaleb, Ahmed

Ahmed Aboutaleb has served as Mayor of Rotterdam since 2009. Born in Morocco and arriving in the Netherlands at the age of 15, Aboutaleb has also served as State Secretary for Social Affairs and Employment. He has balanced the racial and interfaith tensions that exist in Rotterdam. In December 2020, he was confirmed as Mayor for a third term and in 2021 won the World Mayor Award.

## RUSSIA

### Kadyrov, HE President Ramzan

Ramzan Kadyrov is the President of Chechnya and the son of the former president, rebel leader and mufti, Akhmad Kadyrov. In 2016, Kadyrov was re-elected with nearly 98% of the vote. He has overseen a massive reconstruction of Chechnya, and has held several important international Islamic conferences in Chechnya, including one that attempted to define Sunni Islam in 2016. A Putin loyalist, who was recently promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General in the National Guard, he has offered key support in the war on Ukraine.

## TÜRKIYE

### Davutoğlu, Ahmet

Ahmet Davutoğlu was Prime Minister of Türkiye from 2014, before differences with President Erdoğan saw him resign in 2016. He is a political science academic who was appointed Ambassador, Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and then Prime Minister in rapid succession. In 2019, Davutoğlu resigned from the AKP accusing it of falling into a culture of corruption. He then launched a new political party, the Future Party, becoming its first leader, and now hopes to build it into a political force.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Khan, Sadiq

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### Shah, Naseem

Naseem Shah, more commonly known as Naz Shah, is a Labour Party politician who is currently the Shadow Minister for Crime Reduction, having previously held shadow ministerial posts of state for Women and Equalities (2018-20) and Community Cohesion (2020-21). She was re-elected as the MP for Bradford West in the 2019 general election with a huge majority. She is a strong voice for victimized groups and community groups. She has championed the voice of the British Muslim community on the issues of Kashmir and Palestine and has spoken powerfully in the House of Commons in defence of the Prophet (PBUH).

### Warsi, Baroness Sayeeda

Baroness Warsi was Britain's first Muslim Cabinet Minister. 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 Minister of State for Faith and Communities and Senior Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. She resigned from her post in August 2014, citing her disagreement with HM Government's policy over the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict. Baroness Warsi is now involved in a number of charities and educational institutions, and remains a powerful voice on the issue of Islamophobia. In 2017, Baroness Warsi published her first book, *The Enemy Within: A Tale of Muslim Britain*. She is also co-host of the Political reality show 'Make Me Prime Minister' and a regular presenter on daytime TV.

### Yousaf, Humza (new)

Humza Yousaf became the First Minister of Scotland and Leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) in March 2023, becoming not only the youngest person, but also the first Scottish Asian and first Muslim to serve in office. He had previously served as justice secretary (2018-2021) and then as health secretary (2021-2023) and been Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) for Glasgow Pollok since 2016. He has been closely involved with community work including volunteering for the charity Islamic Relief.

---

## *Oceania*

---

### AUSTRALIA

#### **Husic, Ed**

In 2010, Ed Husic became the first Muslim to be elected to the Australian Federal Parliament. When Kevin Rudd announced the Second Rudd Ministry in 2013, Husic was named as Parliament Secretary to the Prime Minister. Taking his oath on the Qur'an, Husic became the first Muslim sworn in to the Australian federal government frontbench. With his rise in political prominence came growing Islamophobic abuse directed toward him. After Labor's victory in the 2022 Australian federal election, Husic became the Minister for Industry and Science.

---

## *North America*

---

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### **Carson, André**

André Carson was the second Muslim to be elected to the US Congress. He was first elected to Congress in 2008, and is now serving his eighth two-year term as representative of Indiana's seventh congressional district. Alongside national issues, he has spoken against Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory, voted against a House resolution condemning the BDI movement and, at the end of July 2002, he announced a bill to investigate the killing of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

#### **Ellison, Keith**

Keith Ellison was the first Muslim to serve in the US Congress. He represented the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota from 2007-2019 before decid-

ing to run for attorney general rather than congress. He was duly elected as the 30th Attorney General of Minnesota becoming the first Muslim in the US to win statewide office, and he was re-elected in 2022. Ellison has been an outspoken advocate for American Muslims, and his trips to the Muslim world have garnered international support for his outreach.

#### **Omar, Ilhan**

Born in Mogadishu, Somalia, to a Somali father and Yemeni mother, Omar came to the USA in 1995 at the age of 13. She excelled in studies and started work as a community nutrition educator whilst also working as a campaign manager. She is the Director of an association that advocates for women from East Africa to take on civic and political leadership roles. She has been the US Representative for Minnesota's 5th congressional district since 2019, (having received the largest percentage of the vote of any female candidate for US House in state history). She is vocal in her support for the working class, students, the environment, Palestinians and other causes. Former President Trump tweeted against her on numerous occasions resulting in death-threats from white supremacists.

#### **Tlaib, Rashida**

Born in the USA, Rashida Tlaib won the Democratic nomination for the US House of Representatives seat from Michigan's 13th congressional district in 2018 and was unopposed in the general election, thus becoming the first Palestinian-American woman, and joint first Muslim woman, in Congress. She has previously served in the Michigan state house (2009 to 2014), and was the first Muslim woman ever elected to the state's legislature. She has been arrested on several occasions: once was during a rally against former President Trump; and once at a pro-labor rally supporting union rights for fast food workers.





# ADMINISTRATION OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

## *Middle East and North Africa*

### EGYPT

#### **Allam, Sheikh Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim**

Sheikh Allam is the 19th Grand Mufti of Egypt (succeeding HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa). In February 2013, he was elected by Al-Azhar's Council of Senior Scholars, headed by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayeb. His election by peers was unprecedented, as the Grand Mufti had previously been chosen by the President of Egypt. Allam is also a professor of Islamic jurisprudence and law at Al-Azhar University, and has written more than 25 works, many of which address issues pertaining to women.

#### **Badie, Dr Mohammed**

Dr Mohammed Badie succeeded Mohammad Mahdi Akef as the 8th Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood in January 2010. Following the military coup against Morsi's leadership, he was one of many Muslim Brotherhood leaders arrested. Badie—whose son was shot dead during one of the counter-protests against the coup—was sentenced to death in April 2015 along with 13 other senior Muslim Brotherhood members. In 2017, the Cassation Court accepted the appeal of Badie and 49 other defendants against their death sentences. He is currently serving multiple life sentences in prison.

### IRAN

#### **Rashad, Professor Ali Akbar**

Professor Ali Akbar Rashad founded the Islamic Research Institute for Culture and Thought, and has been its President since its establishment in 1994. He is a philosopher and a scholar in the field of Philosophy of Religion and Islamic studies. In addition to translations and ongoing research, he has written over 35 books and 69 articles. He is also active in international scholarly activities and conferences, particularly in the field of interfaith dialogue.

### MOROCCO

#### **Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad**

Al-Tawfiq is the Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs in Morocco and a strong supporter of Sufi groups. He is a writer for the Association of Moroccan Authors for Publication, as well as the Vice President of the Moroccan Association for Historical Research. Al-Tawfiq is an advocate of interfaith dialogue, and is currently on the board of World Religious Leaders for The Elijah Interfaith Institute.

### PALESTINE

#### **Hussein, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad**

Sheikh Hussein was appointed the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in 2006. Previously, he had been the manager and imam of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. He is an outspoken critic of the Israeli occupation, and has personally defended the Al-Aqsa Mosque from settlers and the Israeli army. In July, 2018, Hussein issued a fatwa forbidding Muslims from selling or transferring any land in Palestine to Jews.

#### **Sabri, Sheikh Dr Ekrima Sa'id**

Sheikh Sabri is the head of the Supreme Islamic Council and former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and Palestine. He remains an imam of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, where he preaches regularly. Sabri is well-respected in Palestine for his forthright views on Israel. He has been at various times banned from entering Al-Aqsa Mosque and arrested.

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **Altwaijri, Dr Abdulaziz Othman**

Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri is an accomplished academic, senior lecturer, eminent writer and poet. He was the Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), and ex-officio Secretary General of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW) 1991-2019. He established the Supreme Council of Education, Science and Culture, an alliance designated for work outside the Islamic world, and is a member of numerous international organi-

zations and forums such as the Royal Aal Al Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, and the Nizami Ganjavi International Center. Dr Altwaijri is also a staunch advocate of cultural dialogue and the alliance of civilizations and has received high-level distinctions from over 26 countries.

#### **Al-Issa, Dr Mohammad ben Abdel Karim**

Dr Al-Issa was appointed Secretary-General of the Muslim World League in 2016. Prior to that he had served as Minister of Justice and Head of the Supreme Council for Justice. The Muslim World League is an NGO which was founded in 1962 and is based in Makkah. It propagates Saudi teachings worldwide as well as carrying out social work. Al-Issa visited the Vatican in 2017 where he met the Pope and in 2020 led a delegation of Islamic scholars to visit Srebrenica in Bosnia, and Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. He has continued high-profile international trips to promote messages of harmony and interfaith cooperation.

#### **Al-Malik, Dr Salim M**

Dr Salim M Al-Malik was appointed as the new Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) in May 2019 (replacing Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri). Dr Salim has a PhD in Allergy and Clinical Immunology, and a PhD in Pediatrics. He has previously held various senior positions in Saudi Arabia. ISESCO is based in Rabat, Morocco and strives to strengthen cooperation among member states in educational, scientific, and cultural research, making Islamic culture the focal point of educational curricula at all levels.

#### **Al-Othaimeen, Dr Yousef Ahmad**

Dr Yousef Ahmad Al-Othaimeen has been the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) since 2016. Prior to that, Al-Othaimeen was the Minister of Social Affairs for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 2007 to 2015. He holds degrees from Ohio University (1982), and the American University in Washington DC (PhD in 1986). In March, 2018, Al-Othaimeen met with the Pope to discuss the migration crisis and the plight of the Rohingya.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

### **KENYA**

#### **Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed**

Sheikh Khalifa is the Organizing Secretary of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya. He addresses various social issues, as well as encouraging Kenyans to campaign peacefully in general elections and to engage in politics on the basis of issues rather than along tribal affiliations.

### **NIGERIA**

#### **Ahmad, Abdrahman Olanrewaju**

Sheikh Abdrahman Olanrewaju Ahmad is the National Missioner of the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, a 96-year-old Islamic organization established for the purpose of educational, moral, and social development for Muslims. The organization boasts millions of members, with its achievements spanning Nigeria's faiths and ethnicities.

#### **Bayero, Aminu Ado**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

#### **Oloyede, Professor Ishaq Olanrewaju**

Professor Ishaq Olanrewaju Oloyede is the Secretary General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council. He also serves as the President of the Association of African Universities (AAU), and is the former Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin.

#### **Sanusi, Alhaji Dr Sanusi Lamido**

In 2014, Sanusi succeeded his late uncle Dr Ado Bayero to become the 14th Fulani Emir of Kano, the second highest Muslim authority in the land (the Sultan of Sokoto being the first). However, in March 2020 he was dethroned by the Governor of Kano on grounds of showing disrespect towards government institutions. He has accepted this and asked his followers to recognize the new 15th Emir. Sanusi is the former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (2009-2014) and a respected Islamic scholar who has won numerous awards. He has pointed out corruption in previous governments, pushed for an end to child marriage and been targeted by Boko Haram.

## SENEGAL

### Mbacke, Serigne Mountakha

Serigne Mountakha Mbacke was appointed leader of Senegal's Mourid Brotherhood in January 2018 after the death of his predecessor, Serigne Cheikh Sidy Mokhtar Mbacke who died at the age of 94. He has become the eighth caliph of the brotherhood which was established by his grandfather, the sufi Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, who died in 1927 and is buried in Touba. It is estimated that over a sixth of all Senegalese are members of the *tariqah*, and it is particularly influential in the economic and political spheres. The Grand Magal of Touba is a pilgrimage of millions who converge on Touba to celebrate the life and teachings of Amadou Bamba.

---

## Asia

---

## CHINA

### Faming, Hassan Yang

Hassan Yang Faming is the President of the China Islamic Association. This is a government-linked body which liaises with China's Muslims. A conservative estimate numbers 30 million Muslims from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The Hui are the most populous but the Uyghur have the greatest concentration in the Xinjiang region, where internment camps hold over a million Muslims in a bid to 're-educate' them. The 'Sinicization' of Islam has stepped up in relentless fashion in the last few years.

## INDIA

### Ahmad, Sheikh Abubakr

Sheikh Abubakr Ahmad is the General Secretary of the All India Muslim Scholars Association, Founder and Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Markaz Saqafathu Sunniyya, one of the leading educational and humanitarian institutions in India. He is often referred to by his epithet Abul Aytam ('Father of Orphans') for his service to orphans and the destitute. He advocates peaceful co-existence, social harmony and its international propagation and has set up thousands of cultural centres and educational institutes in India. Sheikh Abubakr has authored and published more than 60 books on a variety of topics in Arabic, Urdu and Malayalam. In July 2023 he was awarded the Hijra Award in Malaysia.

### Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibraheemul Khaleel

Sayyid Ibraheemul Khaleel Al-Bukhari is the Founder and Chairman of Jamia Ma'din (Ma'din Academy), Kerala, India. It is an umbrella body of various educational and charity ventures where 25,000 students are enrolled for different courses from primary to research level. He is an advisor to the International Interfaith Harmony Initiative, Malaysia; the Vice President of the Muslim Educational Board of India, New Delhi; General Secretary of Kerala Muslim Jama'at, the apex body of Muslim community in Kerala; and the President of Sunni Management Association. He is also the Managing Editor of *Armonia Journal* ([armoniajournal.com](http://armoniajournal.com)) and has penned 22 books in various languages.

### Kandhalvi, Maulana Saad

Maulana Saad Kandhalvi is the great-grandson of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, the founder of the Tablighi Jamaat (TJ) missionary movement and the grandson of its second ameer. He is currently the head of the TJ centre in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, India. A recent falling out with other leaders has led to some clashes between rival followers and a fatwa issued by Deoband criticizing Maulana Saad's leadership has led to further ramifications worldwide including at Biswa Ijtema, Bangladesh, the second largest religious gathering in the world.

### Nomani, Mufti Abul Qasim

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### Noorie, Maulana Shakir Ali

Maulana Noorie is the President of Sunni Dawate Islami, a non-political religious organization in Mumbai, India. Its Annual Congregation is one of the largest Sunni Muslim assemblies held in India, attracting around 300,000 people annually into the heart of Mumbai, India's financial capital. There are approximately 50 institutions under his leadership providing knowledge to more than 7000 students. Maulana Muhammed Shakir Noorie has authored over 40 books which are published in many languages. He has initiated several human welfare campaigns including: women empowerment through education, feeding and clothing the poor and downtrodden, counselling assistance to the youth, and a programme against drug abuse and intoxicants.

### Owaisi, MP Janab Asaduddin

Barrister Asaduddin Owaisi is an eminent Indian parliamentarian and has served as President of the



All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) since being elected in 2004. Under Owaisi's stewardship, the party won seven assembly seats in 2009 then in 2014. In 2019, he started his fourth term being elected to the 17th Lok Sabha (House of the People). An outspoken parliamentarian, Owaisi has been instrumental in persuading the Indian government to establish the Ministry of Minority Affairs to look after the welfare of religious minorities in India, including Muslims. He has over five million social media followers.

#### **Ul-Hassan, Maulana Zuhair**

Maulana Zuhair Ul-Hassan is a leader of the Tablighi Jamaat (TJ) group. He was born and raised in Nizamuddin, New Delhi and completed his Islamic studies in Saharanpur. His late father Zubair Ul-Hasan was one of three leaders appointed as members of the leadership council. The TJ has faced unprecedented divisions of late with Maulana Zuhair's followers clashing with followers of Maulana Saad Kandhalvi over who leads the TJ.

### **INDONESIA**

#### **Achar, Miftahul**

Miftahul Achar became the Rais 'Aam (Supreme Leader) of the country's largest Muslim organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), after the resignation of Ma'ruf Amin (now Vice-President of Indonesia). The NU was established in 1926 and claims a 90-million membership. It is a charitable body funding schools and hospitals as well as organizing communities to help alleviate poverty. The majority of its leaders promote Islam Nusantara, a moderate and compassionate approach.

#### **Amin, Maruf**

Maruf Amin was the running mate of Joko Widodo in the 2019 general elections and is now the Vice-President of Indonesia. He is an Indonesian Islamic scholar who was chair of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia and general guide of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the world's largest Islamic organization (he resigned in late 2018). Amin's early education was at a boarding school established by NU founder Hasyim Asyari, before receiving his bachelor's degree in Islamic philosophy. He then started his lifelong activities of working in dawah (religious propagation) and politics, finding success in both.

#### **Nashir, Dr KH Haedar**

Dr KH Haedar Nashir was elected as Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Movement in 2015. He previously served in a variety of other roles in the organization, which has approximately 30 million members. The Muhammadiyah Movement focuses on promoting moral and spiritual ideals through various social activities. It strongly opposes syncretism, but promotes interfaith relations.

### **MALDIVES**

#### **Saeed, Dr Mohamed Shaheem Ali**

Dr Mohamed Shaheem Ali Saeed is a hafiz of the Qur'an, a licensed lawyer, and former Chancellor of the Islamic University of Maldives (IUM). He resigned from his post as the Minister of State for Islamic Affairs of the Republic of Maldives in 2015 and left politics altogether in 2017. Dr Saeed was central to the establishment of the Maldives Hajj Corporation, the Maldives Islamic Bank Pvt Ltd, and a waqf fund. He is a member of the Sharia Advisory Council of the Central Bank of the Maldives. Dr Saeed has authored many articles and books on religious issues and has spoken at forums in nine countries.

### **PAKISTAN**

#### **Naqvi, Ayatollah Sayed Sajid Ali**

Ayatollah Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi leads the Shia Ulama Council (previously called Tehrik-e-Jafaria (TJP) of Pakistan). He was chosen by the Supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei, to lead Shia Muslims in Pakistan and is now his religious representative.

#### **Ul-Haq, Siraj**

From humble beginnings, Ul-Haq has worked his way up to senior leadership positions in both religious and political parties. He is a former finance minister of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly in Pakistan, resigning in protest against US drone strikes. In 2019, Ul-Haq was re-elected Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, one of the most influential Islamic movements in Pakistan. He became the Vice President of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal in March 2018. He served as Senator of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the Parliament of Pakistan from 2015-2021.



There is no god except You! Glory be to You! I have indeed been one of the wrongdoers

*The Prophets, 87*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

## SRI LANKA

### **Mufti, MIM Rizwe**

Mufti MIM Rizwe is the President of the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU), the supreme body of Islamic theologians in Sri Lanka. Inaugurated in 1924, ACJU boasts a 7,500-strong membership of scholars while an executive committee of 33 senior scholars run the organization's 155 branches throughout the island's 24 Districts. Mufti Rizwe is a specialist in the field of Islamic Jurisprudence, and was instrumental in bringing Islamic insurance, interest-free banking and halal certification to Sri Lanka. His other contributions that have benefited the Sri Lankan community at large include the Maktab Preliminary Islamic Education System, Careline Islamic Counseling, and Mahmood Institute for Skill Development of Ulama.

## TAJIKISTAN

### **Abdulkodirzoda, Mufti Saidmukarram**

Mufti Saidmukarram Abdulkodirzoda is the state-selected Grand Mufti and thus head of Tajikistan's Muslims, most of whom are Sunnis, and whose tradition includes following the Hanafi school in matters of jurisprudence and the Naqshbandi spiritual path. They belong to the Persian-speaking Tajik ethnic group who share a language, culture, and history with Afghanistan and Iran.

## *Europe*

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

### **Kavazovic, Husein**

Sheikh Husein Kavazovic has been the 14th Raisul-ulama (Grand Mufti of Bosnia) since 2012. Kavazovic had pushed for cooperation with other religious communities and a wider "incorporation of women into the work of the Islamic religious community". His sphere of influence is primarily with the community of 2.5 million Bosniak Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Bosniak diaspora, who number approximately 1.5 million. He speaks Bosnian, Arabic, and English.

## BULGARIA

### **Hadzhi, Mufti Mustafa Alish**

Sheikh Hadzhi is Bulgaria's Chief Mufti. Bulgaria has been referred to as "Istanbulgaria" because of the importance of Turkish-Bulgarian relations. Hadzhi is the leader of the Muslim community in a predominantly Christian state with a large influx of Muslims. He defended his community from extreme nationalists who went so far as to attack mosques and worshippers.

## FRANCE

### **Bechari, Dr Mohamed**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

## GERMANY

### **Köhler, Ayyub Axel**

Köhler is former chairman of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany. He has written numerous articles, primarily for Islamic magazines such as *Al Islam* of the Islamic Centre of Munich, and *Al Fajr* of the Islamic Centre of Hamburg. He also published newsletters for the Muslim League around the issue of the integration of Islamic ways of life into German society.

## ITALY

### **Pallavicini, Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe**

Sheikh Pallavicini is a prominent figure in European relations with the Muslim world. He is Vice President of Comunit Religiosa Islamica (The Islamic Religious Community), Italy, Chairman of EULEMA, the European Muslim Scholars Council, and a former 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 was the late Abd Al-Wahid Pallavicini, the noted preacher and Head of the Ahamadiyyah Idrissiyyah Shadhiliyyah brotherhood in Italy.

## KOSOVO

### **Ternava, Sheikh Naim**

Sheikh Naim Ternava is the Grand Mufti of Kosovo. He is the leading religious figure in Kosovo, which emerged after an ethno-religious war resulted in widespread loss of life and destruction. Ternava 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.

## RUSSIA

### **Nasibullahoglu, Cafer**

Sheikh Cafer Nasibullahoglu is the Imam of St Petersburg Mosque. He is also the Mufti of St Petersburg, home to almost one million Muslims. His diverse congregation consists of Muslims of Tatar,

Kazakh, Uzbek, Tajik, and Arab origins, among others. The sermon at St Petersburg mosque is often conducted in Arabic, Tatar, and Russian.

## SERBIA

### **Dudić, Grand Mufti Mevljud (new)**

Grand Mufti Mevlud Dudić has been serving the 300,000 strong Serbian Muslim population (approximately 4% of the country's population) in his current role since 2014. Previously, he held positions as Director of the Bazi Isa-beg madrasa and Rector of the International University, both in Novi Pazar. He has also served on Government Commissions and has authored hundreds of papers. Fluent in Arabic, English and Albanian, Dudić enjoys good relations with Muslim religious scholars the world over and is a member of the main global Islamic organizations.

---

## *Oceania*

---

## AUSTRALIA

### **Alsuleiman, Imam Shady**

Imam Shady Alsuleiman is an Australian-born imam who has strongly connected with the Muslim youth and helped integrate the Muslim community with wider Australian society. Alsuleiman is the President of the Australian National Imams Council (ANIC), which represents over 200 imams from each of the Australian States and Territories. It is also the body that elects the Mufti of Australia. He's an international speaker with many followers on social media and has also established one of Australia's largest youth and community centres known as the UMA.

---

## *North America*

---

## CANADA

### **Abdur-Razak, Shaykh Faisal Hamid (new)**

Shaykh Faisal is the Founder, President, and Spiritual Leader of the Islamic Forum of Canada for the past 50 years. He is the Ameer (Spiritual Leader) of the Ahlus Sunnah Council of Canada (CCAS) and also served as the Muslim representative on the Government of Canada's Interfaith Committee, as well as heading interfaith delegations to the Vatican. He has



educated local Muslims through his madrasah and now enjoys a global following through his social media. He has authored books covering a wide range of subjects including: Qur'anic Sciences, Hadith, Arabic Language, Seerah, Fiqh, Aqidah, and Tasawwuf.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### Mohammed II, Warithudeen

Warithudeen Mohammed II is the eldest son of Imam W Deen Mohammed. He is President of The Mosque Cares, a charitable organization established by Imam W Deen Mohammed. The organization sponsors classes in Qur'anic Arabic and financial literacy, as well as informational sessions in health and nutrition, and business and entrepreneurial initiatives.

## *South America*

## ARGENTINA

### Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf

Hallar is an active figure in Argentina, and is 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. He is also a member of the Expert Committee on Minority Rights for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

## BRAZIL

### Bukai, Sheikh Mohamad

Sheikh Mohamad Bukai was born in Syria and studied at Al-Azhar University. He has been living in Sao Paulo since 2007 and is known for his soft speech, kind nature and splendid character. He has previously served as sheikh of the Liga Islamica do Pari and is the Imam of the Mesquita Brasil in Sao Paulo and Director of Religious Affairs of the Uniao Nacional das Entidades Islamicas. His page on Facebook often airs live transmissions of his Friday khutbas as well as short videos on Islam.

## ECUADOR

### Suquillo, Professor Juan

Professor Juan Suquillo is the President and Co-founder of the Islamic Centre in Quito. He received the "National Hero" award in recognition for his services to Ecuador. He is also the General Secretary for the Interfaith Council CONALIR fighting for religious rights and anti-discrimination. His books in Spanish have been popular and Suquillo is regarded as a bridge and reference for Latino Muslim leaders and scholars.



With their downcast looks they will emerge from the graves as though they were scattered locusts,

*The Moon, 7*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

# PREACHERS & SPIRITUAL GUIDES

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### ALGERIA

#### **Belkaid, Sheikh Abdellatif**

Sheikh Abdellatif is well-known in Algeria, Egypt, and Europe as a spiritual teacher and leader of the Hibriyya *tariqah*. He inherited his father's spiritual gifts. The sheikh's students include many highly placed officials in the Algerian government, as well as the famous Egyptian scholar, Sheikh Sha'rawi, before the latter's death.

#### **Al-Khairi, Sheikh Abdul-Nacer**

Sheikh Abdul-Nacer is a master of the Shadhili *tariqah*, and has a wide following in his native Algeria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, and various European countries where his students come from all walks of life. He emphasizes the recitation of the Qur'an, as well as abundant *salawaat* (praying for the Prophet Muhammad). He is a descendant of the famous Sufi of Prophetic lineage, Abdul Salam ibn Mashish of Morocco.

### EGYPT

#### **Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar**

Sheikh Abdelkafy is an Egyptian preacher and dawah practitioner. A well-respected hafiz of the Qur'an, he is also the Director of the Qur'anic Studies Centre at the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award. In addition to working in his native Egypt, he travels abroad to help Muslim communities, working specifically with the Muslim community in Canada.

#### **Masoud, Moez**

Moez Masoud is an Egyptian preacher, television and radio presenter, and activist who focuses on the fields of contemporary spirituality, interfaith dialogue, and Islam in the modern world. Masoud has a following of over 25 million on various social media sites, including YouTube videos, Facebook and X. Masoud participated in the post-Tahrir "Egyptian National Dialogue" and has continued that dialogue on socio-political issues in Egypt from within the perspective of traditional Islam.

### IRAQ

#### **Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmed**

Sheikh Kubaisi is a very popular Sunni cleric and preacher in Iraq. He advocates 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**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **Al-Arifi, Dr Muhammad**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

#### **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. He recently apologized on Saudi TV for his past preaching, calling his prior understanding of Islam 'hardline' and apologizing for his past ties with Qatar. He said that he now agrees with the Islamic understanding of Crown Prince MBS. He has over 40 million followers on social media.

#### **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 influencing young people across the Middle East. Best known for his TV program 'Khawatir' (2005-2015), Al-Shugairi took a break for a number of years before launching 'Seen' in 2021, which is proving to be every bit as successful. 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 over 56 million fans across social media platforms.

## YEMEN

### **Al-Zindani, Sheikh Abdul Majeed**

Al-Zindani is an active Yemeni politician and preacher. He is the founder of Iman University in Yemen, the Founder of the Commission on Scientific Signs in the Qur'an and Sunnah in Makkah, the Chairman of the Shura Council of the Islah party (the Yemeni Congregation for Reform), and the Head of the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen. He has been a vocal critic of terrorism and any killing of civilians. At the same time, he is an outspoken critic of US policies, declaring that jihad against any army that invades Yemen is self-defence and is the right of its citizens. The US Treasury labelled him a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) for his indirect association with Al-Qaeda. In 2020 he moved from Saudi Arabia to Türkiye.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

## GHANA

### **Sharubutu, Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu**

Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu Sharubutu is an Islamic scholar, National Chief Imam of Ghana, member of the National Peace Council and Founder of The SONSET Fund and IPASEC. He has worked tirelessly on religious, social and educational issues, helping to promote disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in Ghana. This has enabled him to transcend religious boundaries and be respected by all sectors of the country.

## NIGERIA

### **Bauchi, Sheikh Tahir Usman**

Sheikh Tahir Usman Bauchi of the Tijaniyya Sufi order is celebrated for his Qur'anic schools which specialize in producing *huffaz* (memorisers) of the Qur'an. His public exegesis of the Qur'an, delivered in Hausa every year during the month of Ramadan, attracts thousands. Additionally, millions of West Africans listen to it on the radio or buy recordings. He has critically engaged with puritanical Islamic schools of thought since the early 1980s. In July 2014, he escaped a suicide bombing attack which killed 23 people.

### **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 Bid'ah wa Iqamatus Sunnah (Movement Against Negative Innovations and for Orthodoxy) is an activist salafi movement that calls for a return to the practices of the Prophet Muhammad and a true practice of Islam. His family comes from Katsina, the predominantly Muslim city in northern Nigeria, and he is outspoken against corruption in the country.

### **Maqari, Sheikh Professor Ibrahim Ahmad**

Sheikh Maqari completed his studies at Al-Azhar in 1999 and then his doctorate at Bayero University Kano in 2009. He has lectured across Nigeria as a Professor of Arabic and linguistics. Sheikh Maqari has multiple published books and articles in international journals, and is a member of the Assembly of Muslims in Nigeria, the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, and Founder of Tazkiyyah Educational Resource Center.

## ZIMBABWE

### **Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa**

Dr Ismail Menk is the Mufti of Zimbabwe under the Majlisul Ulama Zimbabwe, an Islamic educational and welfare organization that caters to the needs of the country's Muslims. Mufti Menk is well-known internationally and is often invited to give lectures. His ability to relate religious principles to contemporary settings has made him particularly influential amongst the Muslim youth. His eloquence and humour have endeared him to many non-Muslims as well. His youtube videos have garnered approximately half a billion views.

---

## *Asia*

---

## INDIA

### **Azmi, 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 worldwide. At the age of 18 he established Al-Jameat-ul-Islamia, which is now recognized as one of India's top Islamic universities. For over 50 years, he has been building organizations, institutions, mosques, colleges, and universities around the world.



### **Madani, Maulana Syed Arshad**

Maulana Madani is the President of the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, a group which strongly opposed the creation of a separate Muslim state of Pakistan. In 2006, Maulana Syed Arshad Madani succeeded his brother, Maulana Syed Asad Madani, but since 2008, the group has been split into two factions. Maulana Arshad is also a noted scholar. He is the Principal of Darul Uloom Deoband and Vice President of All India Muslim Personal Law Board. He also supervises much social work and heads a number of Islamic seminaries and bodies and is an advisor to eight international Islamic schools.

### **Naik, Zakir Abdul Karim**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### **Saifuddin, Syedna Mufaddal**

Saifuddin is the 53rd Dai Al-Mutlaq (Unrestricted Missionary) of the Dawoodi Bohras, a subgroup within the Mustaali, Ismaili Shia branch of Islam. He succeeded—but not without dispute—to the office after his father, Syed Mohammed Burhanuddin, passed away in 2014. In 2017, he inaugurated the 14-acre Nairobi campus of Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, a Dawoodi Bohra institute of higher learning. Kenyan President Kenyatta awarded him the Elder of the Order of the Golden Heart as a result. He also met Egyptian President El-Sisi in 2016 and donated 10 million EGP to the Long Live Egypt fund. He is the spiritual leader of 2-5 million people living in 100 countries.

## **INDONESIA**

### **Gymnastiar, Abdullah Aa Gym**

Abdullah Gymnastiar, more commonly known as 'Aa Gym' ('Elder Brother Gym'), was for a long time Indonesia's most popular preacher. With his style of modern, youthful, enjoyable preaching, he built a substantial following and a large media empire. His regular audience boasted over 80 million Indonesians and had an approval rating that peaked at 91%, leading to Gymnastiar being courted by several political parties as a potential vice presidential nominee. Over the past several years, Gymnastiar has been slowly regaining his popularity using his unique preacher/performer style. He is an attractive, funny, and charismatic man who tells engaging stories and sings *nasbeeds* (religious songs). He has over 16 million fans on social media.

### **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 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. He was awarded a medal for his achievements by Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly in 2020.

## **MALAYSIA**

### **Awang, Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin**

Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin Awang is the current President of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party or PAS. He was recently appointed as the Prime Minister's Special Ambassador to the Middle East with ministerial status. He is also the Vice President of the International Union of Muslim Scholars. He was former Chief Minister of the state of Terengganu in Malaysia from 1999-2004, Member of Parliament for Marang Terengganu, and a state lawmaker for Rhu Rendang. He has written several books related to democracy and politics in Islam. Awang's Friday morning lectures at Rusila Mosque draw thousands of people.

### **MrGlani, Sheikh Dr Mahmoud**

Born in Madinah to a family of Prophetic lineage, Sheikh MrGlani himself belongs to the Shadhili Sufi *tariqah* but strongly emphasizes the need to recognize all authentic Islamic Sunni Sufi *tariqahs* and sheikhs. His teachings emphasize the need to establish love for the Prophet. To this end, he has founded a number of *zawiyahs* around the world to re-establish the practice of regular and abundant *dhikr* and *salawaat*. For the past several years, he has been delivering a series of widely attended public lectures titled 'Divine Gifts on the Path to Allah' in major Malaysian cities and universities. He encourages people around the world to rediscover and practise their core human values, to oppose colonial and oppressive thinking, and to espouse mutual respect and tolerance among followers of all the heavenly religions.

## MYANMAR

### **Aung, Khalifa U Thein Win (new)**

Gulam Siddique Saraka Ré Wahedi, better known as Khalifa U Thein Win Aung succeeded his father as the religious leader of KAFTG Garana Organization and Islamic Sufi Tariqah League Myanmar. He studied under teachers in India and Iraq as well as his father. Every year, he actively leads hundreds of religious gatherings across the country serving over 200,000 Myanmar Muslims as a spiritual master. During anti-Muslim riots he helped many of those affected with food and shelter as well as organizing meetings with other faith leaders.

## PAKISTAN

### **Bukhari, Khanum Tayyaba**

Bukhari is one of very few female religious scholars in Pakistan and has significant influence. She is a sought-after speaker who excels in six languages: Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, Punjabi, and Siraiki. She also has a large following in Europe, North America, and Australia. Ms Bukhari is the founder of Bukhari Relief Foundation, a well-known, non-governmental charitable organization that helps people all over Pakistan who have been displaced by major natural disasters.

### **Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad**

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi is a Pakistani public intellectual and Qur'an scholar. He is the founder of Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences and its sister organization, Danish Sara. He was a member of the Council of Islamic Ideology and in 2009, Ghamidi was awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz, the third highest civilian honour of Pakistan. He appears regularly on TV shows and has a large middle-class professional following.

## SINGAPORE

### **Alattas, Syed Hassan bin Muhammad bin Salim**

Syed Hassan, more affectionately known as Habib Hassan, has been a pillar of strength and unity in building religious harmony in Singapore and throughout Southeast Asia. He has condemned acts of terrorism and has been the force behind bringing Islam together with other religions in Singapore. In 2015, during Singapore's 50th National Day, he was conferred one of the highest awards by the Singapore Government in recognition of his outstanding work and contributions toward building a harmonious nation.

---

## *Europe*

---

## ALBANIA

### **Naci, Elvis**

Naci is an Albanian Imam and Director at the Islamic Community of Albania. He is extremely popular in Albania and regularly appears as a guest on talk shows. He also has an active Facebook and Youtube profile. In 2019, he was named Man of the Year by several magazines in Albania.

## GREECE

### **Metso, Mufti Djemali**

Mufti Djemali Metso was one of the muftis in Greece's Western Thrace cities of Komotini and Xanthi who were retired compulsorily by the Greek government recently. The Western Thrace region of Greece is home to a Muslim Turkish minority of around 150,000 people, and Mufti Metso had served the community for over 30 years in his capacity as Mufti of Komotini. He still enjoys a close relationship with the community, who look upon him as not only a mufti but as a spiritual leader.

## TÜRKİYE

### **Gülen, Fethullah**

Fethullah Gülen is a preacher, intellectual and educator, who assumed the leadership of the Nurcu religious movement started by Said Nursi (1878—1960 CE). He enjoyed huge support among all of Türkiye's religious population until he was accused of orchestrating the attempted coup of 15 July 2016, and his organizations and supporters subsequently bore the brunt of Erdoğan's crackdown. Many of his followers and supporters in state institutions, such as the police, judiciary and education, have been targeted and removed from their posts (over 500,000 people have been detained since the coup). Türkiye has formally asked the United States to extradite Gülen.

### **Haqqani, Sheikh Mehmet Adil**

Sheikh Mehmet Adil Haqqani is the Sheikh of the Naqshbandi Haqqani Order, named after the celebrated Sheikh Nazim Al-Haqqani (passed on 2014). He is the eldest son of Sheikh Nazim, and was born and raised in Damascus, Syria, while his father was studying there under his own sheikh, Sheikh Abdul-

lah Fa'izi Dagestani. With an uncanny resemblance to his father, and a soft, humble approach, Sheikh Mehmet is currently teaching thousands of students worldwide.

### **Topbaş, Osman Nuri**

Osman Nuri Topbaş is an author, philanthropist, and spiritual leader of a Naqshbandi Sufi order based in Istanbul. His group is known as Eronkoy (named after the town where he was born) and, like other sufi groups in Türkiye, focuses heavily on charitable work. He has written works in history, literature, religious sciences, and poetry. Translations of his works span 43 languages, including English.

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

### **Babikir, Sheikh Ahmed**

With his gentle and warm disposition, Sheikh Babikir is a popular figure in the UK. He studied Islamic Sciences in Sudan and is fully authorized in a host of Islamic disciplines, including fiqh, hadith, creed, and Sufism. He holds an undergraduate degree in mathematics and a Masters in Management from the University of London. He has contributed widely to UK society through social, charitable, and educational initiatives. He was the Headmaster of Islamic Primary School for many years, and is currently the Director and Founder of Rumi's Cave, a community hub in West London.

### **Nakshawani, Ammar**

Dr Sayed Ammar Nakshawani is an Islamic Lecturer, Scholar, Historian and Author. He is known for his knowledge of Islamic history and Qur'anic exegesis, as well as his ability to convey complex ideas in a clear and engaging manner. His lectures are viewed worldwide and have been translated into multiple languages, making him a popular and influential figure among the global Muslim community. He has previously held positions at Harvard University, the Hartford Seminary, Columbia University and the University of Cambridge.

### **Tzortzis, Hamza (new)**

Hamza Andreas Tzortzis embraced Islam as a young man in 2002 and quickly went on to become an influential voice preaching and discussing Islam in a contemporary manner. He led the dawah organization iERA (founded by Abdur Rahman Green) before starting his own institute. He is the author of *The Divine Reality: God, Islam & The Mirage of Athe-*

*ism* and makes available a range of similar materials through the Sapience Institute, which intellectually equips Muslims and debunks false narratives. Other influential voices in this field are Mohammed Hijab, Ali Dawah and Zeeshan Ali. With significant social media following, they have instilled a confidence in young Muslims on how to navigate aspects of modernity.

---

## *North America*

---

## **CANADA**

### **Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal**

A notable Jamaican-Canadian Muslim convert and Islamic scholar, Dr Bilal Philips is founder of the first accredited Islamic university in India in 2009: Preston International College, Chennai. However he is most notably the Founder and Chancellor of the Islamic Online University AKA International Open University (iou. edu. gm), which currently has over 450,000 registered students studying accredited English-medium degree courses in Islamic Studies (shariah), Education, Psychology, Banking and Finance, IT and Business Administration, and a BA in Arabic language and literature. The IOU has the distinction of having the most diverse student body of any university in the world. Dr Bilal also reaches mass Muslim audiences through his television appearances on global satellite channels like Peace TV, Huda TV, and Islam Channel as well as through his official Facebook page. He has over ten million social media followers.

### **Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz**

Sheikh Rabbani is the Founder, Education Director, and an instructor at SeekersGuidance Canada, an educational institute featuring a very popular Q&A service, online courses, and occasional retreats. In August 2011, he helped launch SeekersHub in Toronto with affiliated branches being developed in Australia and elsewhere. He was formerly 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. He serves as a partner and legal advisor with StraightWay Ethical Advisory.



## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### **Kabbani, Sheikh Muhammad Hisham**

Sheikh 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 Sheikh Muhammad Nazim Adil's death in 2014, 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 centres in the United States and Canada as well as an Islamic retreat centre in Michigan focusing on spreading Sufi teachings.

### **Al-Ninowy, Sheikh Dr Muhammad bin Yahya**

Sheikh Dr Muhammad al-Ninowy is a Syrian-American scholar, author, and medical doctor based in Atlanta, Georgia, whose lineage is traced back to the Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him). In addition to a PhD in Islamic studies from the University of Georgia, he holds a Doctor of Medicine degree. He is the founding director of Madina Institute and Seminaries, The Center for Non-Violence and Peace Studies, and the charitable organization Planet Mercy, with campuses in the USA, Canada, the UK, South Africa, Malaysia, and Norway. Al-Ninowy also leads a school that follows the Sufism of Ahl-Al-Hadith. He was appointed by the Sultan of Malaysia in 2020 to serve as a member of the board of directors of the Islamic University. An upcoming book is: *Nonviolence; a fundamental Islamic principle*.

### **Shakir, Imam Zaid**

Imam Zaid Shakir is a senior faculty member and co-founder of Zaytuna College, Berkeley, California, the first accredited Muslim undergraduate college in the USA. Shakir accepted Islam in 1977 while serving in the United States Air Force. He obtained a BA in International Relations and later earned his MA in Political Science. In 2001, he graduated from Syria's Abu Noor University with a BA in Islamic Studies. He is one of America's top Islamic scholars, a voice of conscience, and a compelling force for the improvement of race relations for non-Muslims in America. He co-founded the New Brunswick Islamic Center, formerly Masjid al-Huda in NJ, Masjid Al-Islam in New Haven, CT, and more recent the Lighthouse Mosque, in Oakland, CA. He led the funeral prayer for the late boxing champion and human rights icon, Muhammad Ali. Inspired to work with religious groups on sustainable living and climate change, he is a Green Faith partner in action for the earth.

### **Suleiman, Imam Omar**

Imam Omar Suleiman is the President of Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research and a professor of Islamic Studies at Southern Methodist University. He started his journey of Islamic learning in the year 2000 and studied in various countries in the Middle East as well as Malaysia. He has become a hugely popular speaker, delivering regular online lectures which have reached millions, as well as writing frequently for various media outlets. In the 2000s, he was noted on a national level as being a strong advocate of community service, interfaith dialogue, and social justice, and was awarded for his outstanding civic achievement by the Mayor and City Council of New Orleans.

### **Wahhaj, Imam 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 neighbourhood. In 1991, he became the first Muslim to recite the Opening Prayer of the Qur'an (*Al-Fatiha*) at the US House of Representatives. Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz, proclaimed 15 August, Siraj Wahhaj Day in honour of his "lifetime of outstanding and meaningful achievement".

---

## Caribbean

---

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

### **Hosein, Sheikh Imran**

Sheikh Imran N Hosein is an Islamic scholar specializing in contemporary interpretations of Islamic eschatology. Having given up his career as a diplomat in 1985 to dedicate his life to the mission of Islam, Sheikh Imran is a tireless missionary who often travels for two to three years at a time in the cause of Islam and calls for Muslims to retreat to faith-based eco-villages until such time as Imam Mahdi appears. He is also a commentator on international monetary economics, and advocates the establishment of free-markets and currency with intrinsic value as a means of savings and aversion of a pending collapse of the "world of paper money". He has very popular videos on YouTube with millions of views, especially related to eschatology, politics, and the economy.

**BRAZIL**

**Hammadeh, Sheikh Jihad**

Sheikh Jihad Hammadeh has a long history of contributions to dawah in Brazil. He is the religious adviser to ANAJI—the National Association of Islamic Jurists. His educational background includes a theological course at the Islamic University of Madinah, a bachelors in history and a masters in social communication. Besides being Vice President of the Uniao Nacional das Entidades Islamicas, he presides over two other islamic institutions. He regularly appears on national TV in Brazil and other media outlets speaking about Islam and has also worked as a consultant for two Brazilian soap operas on the theme of Muslims and Muslim-majority countries.



God is the Protector of the believers; He brings them forth from the shadows into the light. And the disbelievers - their protectors are false deities that bring them forth from the light into the shadows; those are the inhabitants of the Fire, therein they shall abide.

*The Cow, 257*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

# PHILANTHROPY, CHARITY & DEVELOPMENT

## *Middle East and 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 Shia communities throughout the world. He spends his time between the UK and his native Iraq. As a researcher in Islamic Affairs, Sayyed Jawad has authored various studies and articles on religious minorities in Iraq and the need for interfaith dialogue.

### JORDAN

#### **HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah**

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah is the wife of HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein, but is also in her own right an educational activist with global appeal. Through sheer hard work, she has developed one of the largest virtual followings of any Muslim in the world (over 38 million followers), and she defends and humanizes Islam and Arab causes in and to the West as effectively as any Muslim scholar in the world. She is the initiator and key leader behind the launch of several educational initiatives such as the Jordanian Madrasati, 'My School', a project for the development of Jordan's public school system. In 2017, Queen Rania received the Global Trailblazer Award and the Fellowship Award from 'Fashion for Relief' in recognition of her humanitarian efforts towards children caught in conflict.

### LEBANON

#### **Al-Sadr, Rabab**

Rabab Al-Sadr is a social and human rights activist and 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.

### QATAR

#### **HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned**

Her Highness Sheikha Mozah is the mother of the current Emir of Qatar, and Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. The Foundation has brought some of the leading US university programmes to Qatar. It also promotes international research, and provides scholarships around the world. Sheikha Mozah also 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. She plays a very active role in promoting a wide range of issues at home, in the Gulf region, and internationally.

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **AbuSulayman, Muna**

Muna AbuSulayman was the first Saudi woman to become an iconic TV personality and is internationally recognized as a leader in the fields of philanthropy, media and social impact. She is one of the founding co-hosts of the social issues show 'Kalam Nawaem', which was ranked number one across the Arab World for eleven 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 while managing one of the largest Muslim foundations. AbuSulayman has successfully launched, managed, and scaled multiple businesses and is running a Social Impact investment fund and consultancy that focuses on finding "Big Ideas that Work" to solve problems in education, gender inequalities, sustainability and social cohesion.

#### **Al-Madani, Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali**

Dr Al-Madani is the President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), which aims to provide short- and long-term solutions to poverty alleviation in the Muslim world. The IDB is the principal financing institution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Al-Madani is keen on taking the IDB to the next level of excellence with Vision 1440H—a



plan that aims at alleviating poverty, eradicating illiteracy, providing better health facilities to people, strengthening ties with the private sector and NGOs, and enhancing women's development. Previously, Al-Madani served as the Deputy Minister of Education in Saudi Arabia, and as Secretary General of the Muslim World League, and served as a Member of the Board of Trustees of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### **HH Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qassimi**

Sheikh Sultan is the Ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah. He had the educational vision to start University City in 1997, which includes the American University of Sharjah, the University of Sharjah, and other colleges. Since, his vision has inspired neighbouring emirates and countries to emulate his endeavour to bring 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). He is a great promoter of the arts and culture, with Sharjah boasting 16 galleries and museums, and he is also an accomplished poet, writer and academic.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

## SOUTH AFRICA

### **Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail**

Sooliman is the founder of Gift of the Givers Foundation. It is the largest disaster relief organization of African origin on the African continent. His organization has delivered over \$248 million in aid to 45 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 Baobab for distinguished service in April 2010. In 2016, he received the Global Citizen Award from Henley and Partners in London.

---

## *Asia*

---

## INDIA

### **Premji, Azim**

Premji is an Indian business tycoon and philanthropist who was the Chairman of Wipro Limited, a leader in the software industry, and remains non-executive director of the board. In 2011, he was awarded Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award by the Government of India. In 2013, he signed the Giving Pledge, agreeing to give away at least half of his wealth and has given away billions in charity since then. The Azim Premji Foundation supports programmes that reach more than 2.5 million children. It also pledged \$134 million towards providing aid for the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal**

Maulana Badruddin Ajmal is a prominent Indian businessman 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 President Director of the Mizan Group, 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 one of the richest Malaysians. He owns a variety of companies including the Malaysian Mining Corporation, a behemoth that has been awarded multiple, multi-billion dollar projects. In 2020 he was awarded a 5G contract from the government, showing his political connections. 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 and is the Founder of Albukhary Group of Companies.

## PAKISTAN

### Rizvi, Professor Dr Adibul Hasan

Dr Rizvi is one of Pakistan'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 eight-bed unit but is now the largest health organization in Pakistan. SIUT provides free and comprehensive services in urology, nephrology, transplantation, and liver-related diseases. He is the recipient of many awards for his life's work.

## SINGAPORE

### Faizal, Mohamed

Mr Mohamed Faizal is a second chief prosecutor at the AGC. He is the only Muslim Senior Counsel in Singapore and the only Muslim on Singapore's Supreme Court bench. He is a passionate champion of educational initiatives and established scholarship programmes specifically targeted at lower-income students. He has received the President's Volunteerism and Philanthropy Award, being the second Muslim in its history to receive it.

## Europe

## UNITED KINGDOM

### El-Banna, Dr Hany

Dr El-Banna is the founder of Islamic Relief, the largest Western-based international Muslim relief and development NGO. Established in 1984, the organization provides assistance in over 45 countries worldwide. HM the late Queen Elizabeth honoured El-Banna's work, giving him an OBE for his services to the community. In 2015, Islamic Relief signed a memorandum of understanding with the African Union, formalising a partnership to tackle poverty in the continent. This year he received the Daniel Phelan Award for Outstanding Achievement.

### Ismail, Sufyan

Sufyan Ismail is an award-winning Entrepreneur and Philanthropist whose enterprises have been featured in *The Sunday Times* Top 100 listings. Having retired from business in 2014, aged 38, he founded Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) to tackle Islamophobia. MEND engages in media monitoring, advocacy in Parliament, works with police forces, local councils and most importantly, empowers grass-roots Muslim communities. Today, MEND employs hundreds of staff members across offices nationally dedicated to protecting Islam and Muslims in the UK and internationally. Over 40,000 Muslims have sat through MEND's Islamophobia presentations and around 3,500 people have been trained on its media/politics masterclasses. The World Economic Forum and the EU's *The Parliament* magazine have commended MEND's work.

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَى اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُواكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ  
وَزَظْهُرُوا عَلَى إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوْهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

God only forbids you in regard to those who waged war against you on account of religion and expelled you from your homes and supported [others] in your expulsion, that you should make friends with them. And whoever makes friends with them, those—they are the wrongdoers.

*She That is to be Examined, 9*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### EGYPT

#### **Karam, Dr Azza**

Dr Azza Karam is the Secretary General of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. She previously served as the senior advisor on social and cultural development at the United Nations Population Fund, and was a senior policy research advisor at the United Nations Development Program, where she coordinated the Arab Human Development Reports. She also holds the endowed Professor position of Religion and Sustainable Development at Amsterdam's Vrije Universiteit.

### 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. Since the presidential elections of 2009, she has been forced to live in exile (in London) while her husband is barred from travelling out of Iran.

### MOROCCO

#### **Soufi, Nawal**

Nawal Soufi won the UAE 'Arab Hope Maker' Prize in 2017 and was awarded 1 million AED for her dedication to the cause of helping refugees. She arranged rescue missions for Syrian refugees fleeing across the Mediterranean Sea.

### PALESTINE

#### **Abuelaish, Dr Izzeldin**

Izzeldin Abuelaish is a Palestinian physician and internationally recognized peace and human rights activist devoted to advancing health and educational opportunities for women and girls in the Middle East. He is also known for using health as a vehicle

for peace. Dr Abuelaish's book, *I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor's Journey*—the story of his loss of his three daughters, Bessan, Mayar, and Aya, and their cousin Noor to Israeli shelling in 2009 and his subsequent transformation—has achieved critical acclaim. Published in 2010 and translated into 17 languages, the book has become an international best seller. It is a testament to his commitment to forgiveness as the solution to conflict, and the catalyst towards peace. He has received a number of national and international awards for his work, including The Public Peace Prize in 2014.

#### **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 is a former Executive Director of the Centre for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University. He was named as National Geographic Explorer in 2011, and a TED fellow in 2014. He was the First Intercultural Innovation Award winner, an award issued in partnership by the UNAOC and BMW. Aziz has published articles at *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Alarabiya*, *National Geographic* and others. His book, *Crossing Boundaries, a Traveler's Guide to World Peace*, was published in 2020.

#### **Al-Faqih, Judge Kholoud**

Faqih made history when she became the first female shariah judge in the Middle East (in Ramallah, Palestine). She has travelled internationally to speak about her struggles in succeeding in a male-dominated field, and has become an inspiration to many women outside the Middle East as well. She ranked number ten in the 100 Most Powerful Arab Women in 2012 by *CEO Middle East* and *Arabian Business* magazines. An award winning documentary, *The Judge*, was made about her life in 2018.

#### **Al-Hroub, Hanan**

A school teacher from occupied Palestine who won The Global Teacher Prize in 2016, Hanan Al-Hroub started teaching traumatized Palestinian children who had faced violence, or whose parents had been shot in front of them. Hanan Al-Hroub instilled confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to live a nor-



mal childhood in her students. She published a book entitled *Play and Learn* that includes educational games that help children overcome the challenges they face.

#### **Tamimi, Ahed**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### **QATAR**

#### **Al-Muftah, Ghanim (new)**

Ghanim Al-Muftah is the embodiment of “Impossible is Nothing”. He was born with a caudal regression syndrome, a condition affecting the development of his lower spine. He has not let this affect his attitude to life and displays tremendous character in engaging in his interests and activities. He is a successful entrepreneur and motivational speaker, enjoying the following of over five million people on social media and more than one billion views on his YouTube channel. At the 2022 football World Cup, Ghanim was appointed Qatar’s brand ambassador, and goodwill ambassador. He kicked-off the event by reciting from the Holy Quran and then went on to call for the world to embrace unity and diversity. In an iconic moment, he shared the stage with Morgan Freeman. He is currently pursuing his dream of becoming a diplomat and is currently majoring in political sciences.

#### **HH Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh bin Nasser Al-Thani**

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 education 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 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 educational initiatives, and is leading the way to transform Qatar’s education system.

### **SAUDI ARABIA**

#### **Badawi, Samar**

Samar Badawi is a Saudi Arabian human rights activist. She has been arrested several times, imprisoned and been subject to a travel ban. She has campaigned for women driving, women voting and other women and human rights issues. She has received international recognition for her activism. Her arrest in 2018, alongside fellow activist Nassima Al-Sadah, prompted a defence from Canada and then a response from Saudi Arabia leading to a major diplomatic falling out between the two countries. She was released from prison in June, 2021.

#### **Al-Hathloul, Loujain**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

#### **Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed**

Thoraya Obaid is one of the few Saudi women on the Shura Council. She was formerly the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, the world’s largest multilateral fund for population assistance. She was the first Saudi national to head a UN agency and was also Chair of the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the principal inter-agency organization for coordinating management matters within the UN. She underlined religion and culture as important aspects for the agency’s development work.

### **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

#### **Al-Ameri, Khalid**

Khalid Al-Ameri is a content creator with millions of followers on his social media platforms and hundreds of millions of views on his youtube channel. His videos showcase humanitarian efforts as well global multiculturalism with the aim of promoting better understanding and harmony. Many of his videos have also looked at aspects of family life and love.

#### **Barakat, Maha**

Maha Barakat was appointed Director-General of the recently established Frontline Heroes Office (The Fakh Al Watan Office) which aims to support all frontline workers in the UAE. She also serves as the Board Chair of the RBM Partnership to End Malaria, having previously been the Director General of the Health Authority Abu Dhabi from 2013-2018. Prior to that she worked at the Imperial College London

Diabetes Centre which she founded in Abu Dhabi. She was awarded an OBE in 2010 and given the Imperial College Medal in 2013. An outstanding academic with a PhD from Cambridge University, she serves on various boards and committees related to research and development issues in the medical field.

#### **Mattar, Dr Maryam**

Dr Maryam Mattar is Director General of the Community Development Authority (CDA), a newly launched Dubai government authority that takes responsibility for setting up and developing frameworks for social development. She is also the founder and Executive Director of two non-profit civil associations: UAE Down's Syndrome Association and UAE Genetic Diseases Association. She has also initiated several national community outreach programmes such as UAE Free of Thalassaemia by 2012 and established a number of wellness centres. She received the Arab Women's Pioneer Award for Health Innovation 2019.

### **YEMEN**

#### **Karman, Tawakkol**

Karman was one of three women jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. She is a Yemeni journalist and activist who has regularly led protests against the government. Over the past several years, she 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. She has repeatedly called for an end to US drone strikes in Yemen. More recently, she has spoken out against both the Houthi coup and the "Saudi-UAE occupation" of Yemen.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

### **BURKINA FASO**

#### **Aboubakary, Maiga**

Aboubakary is the Secretary General of the Burkina Faso Islamic Organisation for Population and Development. His organisation 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 by raising awareness and asking people to "stay clean". HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Burundi, affecting close to 20% of the urban population and nearly 10% of the rural population.

### **COTE D'IVOIRE**

#### **Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba**

Sheikh Abdoulaziz is the leader of the Association Soulatine pour les Actions de Bienfaisance. He works in Côte 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 that deal with the problem of Islamophobia.

### **GAMBIA, THE**

#### **Bensouda, Fatou**

Bensouda is former Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, being the first African woman to hold such a position. She has been the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor since June 2012, after having served as Deputy Prosecutor in charge of the Prosecutions Division of the ICC since 2004. She is the former Attorney General and Minister of Justice of The Gambia. In September 2020, the Trump administration named Bensouda a "specially designated national" forbidding all US persons and companies from doing business with her. The Biden administration revoked this in 2021.

### **GHANA**

#### **Ibrahim, Sheikh Mustapha**

Sheikh Mustapha Ibrahim is a religious scholar who has written over 20 books. He is among the few Islamic scholars in Ghana who have had the benefits of both classical Islamic training (the madrasah study circle) and the modern secular model. He founded the Islamic Council for Development and Humanitarian Services (ICODEHS) in 1996 to help reduce the high level of poverty in society and empower the less privileged. In collaboration with several partner NGOs in the Arab and Muslim world, ICODEHS' humanitarian footprints have spread throughout Ghana and into 12 other countries in West Africa.

# UN World Interfaith Harmony Week

[www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com](http://www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com)

In September 2010, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan proposed a World Interfaith Harmony Week at the Plenary session of the 65th United Nations General Assembly in New York. This was a call to establish a week every year where people of all faiths, and those of no faith, would promote the message of *'Love of God, and Love of the neighbour'*, or *'Love of the Good, and Love of the Neighbour'*. The Draft Resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week was later written and presented by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Chief Advisor to King Abdullah II for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Personal Envoy of King Abdullah II, before the United Nations General Assembly where it was unanimously adopted on 20 October 2010.

UN Resolution A/65/PV. 34; the World Interfaith Harmony Week, as it is called, recognises the first week of February of every year as a time when people of all faiths, and those of no faith, work together to promote and celebrate religious and cultural understanding and cooperation, to address each other in favourable terms drawn from their own traditions and to accept and respect 'the other' based on the foundations of *'Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour'*, or *'Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour'*. Remarkably the World Interfaith Harmony Week excludes no one and includes and unites everyone.



## The HM King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize

The Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan established the World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize in 2013 to recognise the three best events or texts organised during the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week (first week of February) which best promote the goals of the World Interfaith Harmony Week. Prizes are awarded to each event or text that is judged to have been most successful in promoting interfaith harmony and impacting religious understanding. Since 2014, this prize has been known as the King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize. The prizes are:

First	\$5,000 and a gold medal
Second	\$3,000 and a silver medal
Third	\$1,000 and a bronze medal

In 2023, 1,065 events held in over 50 countries were registered on the site. They were arranged by groups as diverse as government agencies, social groups, schools, private individuals and of course the numerous interfaith organisations that exist worldwide.

In 2023 the winners were, first prize, Ethiopia Interfaith Forum for Development Dialogue and Action (EIFDDA), Ethiopia; second prize, Cross-cultural Ministry of Kolding Deanery in cooperation with the Office of Migrant Cooperation and Encounter with Other Religions of the Haderslev Diocese, Denmark; joint third prize, Afrogiveness Movement & Positive Youth Africa, Cameroon; and joint third prize, Oxford Interfaith Forum, UK





## MALAWI

### **Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala**

Sheikh 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 and exploitation issues as well as building bridges with non-Muslims in Malawi. He also fought against the forced teaching of religious texts to school children.

## NIGER

### **Mindaoudou, Dodo Aichatou**

Mindaoudou is a former Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and African Integrity. She has served the government since the mid-1990s and is also the former Secretary-General for the Network for Rural Law. Ms Mindaoudou has written extensively about economic development and women's issues. She is one of the most senior-level women politicians in West Africa having been the UN Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire, Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) from 2013-2017 and in 2020 she was appointed co-chair by the World Health Organization (WHO) of an independent commission to investigate claims of abuse by aid workers.

## NIGERIA

### **Ashafa, Imam Muhammad**

Imam Ashafa is the Co-director of the Muslim-Christian Interfaith Mediation Centre in the city of Kaduna (Northern Nigeria), a leading task force that resolves conflicts across the country. He works with Christian Pastor James Wuye to promote peace between religions. Previously, both leaders encouraged hatred of others, but they changed their ways after being injured and affected by inter-religious violence. Pastor Wuye and Imam Ashafa have gained a worldwide audience and intense interest in their story by speaking about their successful work in resolving conflicts. In April 2013, they were awarded the first prize in the World Interfaith Harmony Week by the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Amman, Jordan.

## SENEGAL

### **Kane, Zeinaba**

Zeinaba Kane is the President of Women of the Rassemblement Islamique du Sénégal (Alwahda), the largest Islamic organization in Senegal, having over 40 Islamic associations operating within it. Kane works on the improvement of living conditions for rural women in Senegal. She has written many articles and is frequently interviewed by the media.

## SOMALIA

### **Dayib, Faduma**

Dayib is a development expert and a social change activist. In 2016, defying many death threats, she became the first woman to run for President of Somalia. Despite pulling out at the last minute, she has nevertheless raised awareness on the monumental roles Somali women continue to play in peacebuilding and statebuilding since independence. Born in Kenya to illiterate parents, she did not learn to read and write until she was 14. At 17, she moved to Finland and completed two masters degrees before winning a fellowship to study public administration at Harvard.

### **Elmi, Asha Haji**

Asha Haji Elmi is a peace activist and a former member of the Federal Parliament of Somalia. In 2008, she 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.

### **Ismail, Dr Edna Adan (new)**

At the age of 85, Dr Edna Adan Ismail was awarded the 2023 Templeton Prize in recognition of her decades long work in health care. A nurse and midwife, she has been a tireless healthcare advocate for women in her region, campaigning especially against FGM. She founded a hospital which has significantly improved maternity mortality rates. She was the first lady of Somalia, as the wife of Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, Prime Minister of a united Somalia in the late 1960s and also served as the director of the Ministry of Health.

## AFGHANISTAN

### **Joya, Malalai**

Malalai is a well-known 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 Afghan Parliament. She was the first ever to speak against the democratically elected Karzai administration and its western supporters, specifically the United States. She is renowned for her attempts to teach women and girls to read and write in the refugee camp where she resided during the Soviet-Afghan war. She fled Afghanistan after the Taliban took over and is now taking refuge in Spain.

### **Samar, Dr Sima**

Dr Sima Samar is a medical doctor who lived as a refugee for over a decade. She established the Shuhada Clinic to provide health care for fellow Afghan women refugees in Pakistan. Upon her return to Afghanistan she served as Minister of Women's Affairs of Afghanistan (2001 to 2003). She has established an institute of higher education and carries on human rights work both nationally and internationally. She was State Minister for Human Rights and International Relations in Afghanistan before the ministry was dissolved in 2020.

## BANGLADESH

### **Hossain, Dr Hameeda**

Dr Hossain has published many books and articles relating to human rights and women's issues in Bangladesh and around the world. She is a founding member of Ain o Salish Kendra, a legal aid and human rights organization. She received the Bangladesh Development Initiative's (BDI) Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021.

### **Sultana, Razia**

Razia Sultana is a Bangladeshi lawyer and human rights activist who has worked tirelessly for the Rohingya people. She interviewed hundreds of Rohingya women and published their accounts of sexual violence by the Burmese security forces. She is a coordinator of the Free Rohingya Coalition (FRC) and a director of the Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO). She won the International Women of

Courage Award 2019.

### **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 focus on creating economic and social development, helping the impoverished escape poverty by providing loans on terms suitable to them, and teaching them sound financial principles. Yunus' work has been recognized by many international organizations, including the King Hussein Foundation, Jordan, and UNESCO. In 2012, he was named the Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland. In 2016, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon appointed him to the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth. Recently, he has represented the People's Vaccine Alliance and initiated the 'Make COVID-19 Vaccine A Global Common Good' campaign.

## CHINA

### **Tohti, Ilham**

Ilham Tohti is the most renowned Uyghur public intellectual in the People's Republic of China. For over two decades he has worked tirelessly to foster dialogue and understanding between Uyghurs and Chinese. Frequently harassed and arrested, in 2014 he was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of separatism. Much of the evidence against him included his teaching materials and interviews with foreign journalists. For his work in the face of adversity he was awarded the PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award (2014), the Martin Ennals Award (2016), the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize (2019), and the Sakharov Prize (2019). Current reports estimate over a million Uyghurs have been detained in internment camps undergoing 're-education' and forced abortions and sterilization as the intensity of the Chinese crackdown on Muslim practice in the eastern region continues.

## INDIA

### **Bano, Bilkis**

Bilkis Bano, known popularly as Dadi (grandmother), is an 85-year-old woman who inspired protests in India against the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), both of which discriminate against Muslims. Her Gandhian style of protest attracted thousands of

mainly Muslim women in the Delhi locality Shaheen Bagh and continued unabated for 100 days until a COVID-19 lockdown was enforced. The Indian government's arrests and assaults on the protests are another front in the battle for India's soul (Gandhi vs RSS – Hindu Nationalism) and democracy.

#### **Khan, Dr Saniyasnain**

Dr Saniyasnain Khan is a prolific author of children's literature, known for establishing Goodword Books in 1996. To date, he has written over 100 children's books with a primary focus on Islamic themes. His works have gained international recognition and been translated into numerous languages. Goodword's Qur'an translations are available in 40 languages, with over 10 million free copies distributed worldwide, particularly in Africa and Latin America. Additionally, Khan serves as a trustee of CPS International, which aims to foster the culture of peace and spirituality.

#### **Parvez, Khurram (new)**

Khurram Parvez is an internationally recognised human rights activist based in Srinagar, Kashmir, who has been in prison since his arrest under India's draconian anti-terrorism legislation in November 2021. UN and Human rights groups have demanded his release calling his detention an act of reprisal for his human rights work, and an attempt to silence him and Kashmiri civil society as a whole.

#### **Ramzan, Dr Mubeena**

Dr Mubeena Ramzan educates and empowers women in Kashmir. She runs the Jamia Islamia Mahdul Muslimat, based in Sopore and in Srinagar and also heads a socio-religious organization, Ansar un Nisa. The former institute graduates religious scholars while the latter provides a helping hand to the needy, would-be brides, widows and orphans and also establishes vocational training centres.

### **INDONESIA**

#### **Siradj, Professor KH Said Aqil**

Professor Siradj served as the Nahdlatul Ulama Chairman from 2010 to the end of 2021. He had previously served on Indonesia's National Commission for Human Rights and was a strong advocate for minority rights. He 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. He is involved in various organizations addressing social and religious issues.

### **MALAYSIA**

#### **Anwar, Zainah**

Zainah Anwar co-founded two ground-breaking women's groups to promote the rights of women living in Muslim contexts. She is the Co-Founder and Director of Musawah: A Global Movement for Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family. Prior to this, she founded and was Executive Director 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 addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos and delivered a keynote address at Harvard University titled 'Islam, Human Rights, and Activism'. *Newsweek* and *The Daily Beast* named Anwar one of the 150 women 'Who Shake the World'.

### **NEPAL**

#### **Siddiqui, Mohammadi**

Mohammadi Siddiqui is a pioneering female Muslim politician, social worker, and 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 and provides services to the victims of domestic violence.

### **PAKISTAN**

#### **Mazari, Muniba**

Muniba Mazari is an artist, motivational speaker, humanitarian, TV host, model and Pakistan's First Goodwill Ambassador to UN Women Pakistan. She derives her strength from the tragic car accident that took place when she was 21 which left her wheelchair-bound. Since then, she has been a pioneering



voice heard in different countries around the world, being a motivational speaker through TEDx, Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), VCon Malaysia, VCon Dubai and several others. In June 2019, Muniba was appointed by former Prime Minister, Imran Khan, to be a part of Pakistan's first ever National Youth Council. She has over 5 million followers on different social media platforms.

#### **Yousafzai, Malala**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

### **PHILIPPINES**

#### **Rasul-Bernardo, Amina**

Amina Rasul-Bernardo, an advocate for peace and democracy, is President and co-founder of the Philippine Centre for Islam and Democracy (PCID) and a columnist with *Business World*. Appointed Director of the Mindanao Development Authority, she was a member of the cabinet of former President Fidel V Ramos, former Commissioner for Women, former Director of the Development Bank of the Philippines, and Director of the Philippine National Oil Corporation. She led the organization of the National Ulama Conference of the Philippines and the Noorus Salam (Light of Peace), a national network of female scholars and Muslim women civil society leaders. She also led the development of an Islamic Model for Peace Education for Mindanao. The UN Act for Peace Programme named her the Mindanao Peace Champion in 2010. In 2013, she won second place in the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize.

#### **Rasul, Santanina Tillah**

The first Muslim woman elected to the Senate of the Philippines, former Senator Santanina Tillah Rasul is also the founder and Chair of the Magbassa Kita (Let us Read) Foundation Inc, which focuses on literacy and education. She is noted for her work on women's empowerment, effective civil service, improved literacy for the Muslims of Mindanao, and equitable treatment of Muslims of the Philippines. She authored much landmark legislation, including the Women in Development and Nation-Building Act that empowered women. She also allocated development funds for women's initiatives and opened the Philippine Military Academy to women. A peace champion, she was a member of the government panel during the peace talks with the Moro National

Liberation Front that led to a peace agreement that was signed in 1996. In 2019 she was conferred the Tandang Sora Award.

### **SINGAPORE**

#### **Izzuddin, Dr Mustafa (new)**

Dr Mustafa Izzuddin's decades of voluntary leadership have churned out a range of sustainable socio-cultural programmes as well as being a leading voice in interfaith bridge-building. His foundation champions educational causes, including scholarships to university students. Izzuddin is also an academic with hundreds of published writings and presentations done in relation to Southeast Asia, and the nexus between Islam and International Relations. He became the first Singaporean to be designated an ASEAN Fulbright Fellow by the US State Department, and remains the only Singaporean to be awarded the prestigious fellowship on civilizational dialogue by ICESCO. He was presented with the national appreciation plaque by the President of Singapore for his services.

#### **Yacob, HE Halimah**

Halimah Yacob became Singapore's eighth, and first female, President in September 2017. She decided against running for a second term in the September 2023 elections. As President she promoted initiatives for supporting a cohesive society, strengthening interfaith and recognizing all workers who contribute to Singapore's growth. She has a strong international profile, regularly meeting world leaders. She entered politics in 2001 and a decade later was appointed Minister of Community Development, Youth and Sports and later on Minister of Social and Family Development. She was elected Speaker of Parliament in 2013, becoming the first woman to hold the post.

### **SRI LANKA**

#### **Ismail, Jezima**

An educator for over three decades, Jezima Ismail is the Chairperson of People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL), President Emeritus and Founder of the Sri Lanka Muslim Women's Conference (SLMWC), Founder and Chairperson of the Academy of Adult Education for Women (AAEW), Member of the Board of Management for the Center for Human Rights at the University of Colombo, Coordinator of the Muslim Women's Research and Action Forum, Vice President of the Girl Guides As-

sociation, and a member of the Board of Directors of Helpage in Sri Lanka. In 1989, the Government of Sri Lanka conferred on her the title of Deshabandhu, the third highest national honour.

### **Marsoof, Justice Dr Saleem**

Justice Dr Saleem Marsoof is a former President of the Court of Appeal, a Judge of the Supreme Court and Acting Chief Justice. Throughout his career Justice Marsoof has played major roles in the fields of higher education and law reform as well as major contributions in the field of Company Takeovers and Mergers, Arbitration Law and Muslim Matrimonial Law. He is the founding President of the University of Colombo Muslim Majlis, Vice President of the YMMA Central and Chairman of the Zahira College Colombo Board of Governors.

## **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 Transformation in Bangkok. In the 1990s, 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*

---

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

### **Muftić, Elmedina**

Elmedina Muftić is a journalist, author and social and political activist having published over 500 articles on the impact of the genocide in Bosnia and the role of women in Bosniak society. Elmedina's life mission is to ensure that the victims of the Bosnian genocide are never forgotten. Her passion is to raise Bosniaks' awareness of who they are, to awaken their dignity and cultural pride, and to fight for their historical and traditional heritage.

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

### **Hafiz, Asim (new)**

Asim Hafiz OBE is the Islamic Religious Advisor to the UK Chief of the Defence Staff and Service Chiefs as well as an Imam to the Forces. His work has been instrumental in changing the religious and cultural awareness of non-Muslim forces and developing closer relationships between the Muslim community and Defence. He is active within his community and leads the recently founded Avicenna Foundation, which offers university scholarships.

### **Qureshi, Khawar**

Khawar Qureshi QC is one of the world's leading advocates on international arbitration, administrative and constitutional law, public international law and commercial litigation. He was the youngest advocate ever to have appeared before the International Court of Justice in 1993 for Bosnia's genocide case against Yugoslavia. From 1999 to 2006, he remained one of only 20 barristers which the UK Government had appointed for representing it in civil matters. He routinely appears at the International Court of Justice, most recently as the counsel for Pakistan in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case, the Indian spy convicted on charges of terrorism, espionage and sabotage. He has been a Deputy High Court Judge and Bench of Middle Temple since 2014, as well as having taught Commercial Law, International Law and International Arbitration at Cambridge University, King's College, University of London.

### **Williams, Paul (new)**

Paul Williams is behind the hugely influential 'Blogging Theology' social media platforms (primarily *YouTube*). A former evangelical Christian, Williams converted to Islam and started engaging in debates with people of differing creeds. He still frequents Speakers Corner in Hyde Park but much of his activity has now moved online. His *YouTube* channel invites scholars and intellectuals to discuss their various areas of expertise. His polite and sincere manner in understanding and presenting these views has enabled him to build a significant following.

---

## Oceania

---

### AUSTRALIA

#### **Chowdhury, Sheikh Tawfique**

Chowdhury is the Founder, Chairman, and CEO of Mercy Mission, one of the world's fastest-growing Muslim social enterprises. Its premier programme is the AlKauthar Institute, which offers courses in Islamic disciplines to the general public through a medium that is accessible to working professionals. When AlKauthar initially launched in 2005, its offerings were limited to Australia. AlKauthar Institute has since spread its reach across the Western world, South Africa, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Malaysia. A medical doctor by profession, Chowdhury studied Islamic theology in Madinah, specializing in Islamic finance, personal law, and Islamic medical ethics. He also runs a successful multinational IT company, and is a corporate trainer and business coach to many successful people worldwide.

---

## North America

---

### CANADA

#### **Dayrit, Flordeliza**

Flordeliza Dayrit is the co-founder and CEO of *MuslimKids TV*, the category leader in children's streaming services for Muslim audiences. The *MuslimKids TV* platform has over 5,000 video titles, interactive games, and eBooks available in over 60 countries. Flordeliza began her career in 2004 as co-producer of the documentary series *A New Life in a New Land: The Muslim Experience in Canada* (Vision TV, SCN, CLT). In 2006, Flordeliza worked as an art director for several TV projects in Cairo, Egypt. She then started writing and directing TV series in 2007 with the *Hurray for Baba Ali* series, which has been viewed over 17 million times on *YouTube*.

#### **Kutty, Faisal**

A leading North American Muslim lawyer, academic and public intellectual, Faisal Kutty is outspoken on issues of human rights, Islamic thought, religion and law, and national security. He is an associate professor at Southwestern Law School, an affiliate faculty member at Rutgers University Center for Security, Race and Rights, and counsel to a respected Toron-

to law firm with an international client base. He co-founded the Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association and served as its first legal counsel and previously served as the vice chair and legal counsel to the Canadian Council on American Islamic Relations (now renamed the National Council of Canadian Muslims). He is a frequent keynote speaker, widely quoted commentator, and he has written hundreds of op-eds, academic articles, papers, reviews and essays on a wide range of topics.

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### **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. Awad is one of the signatories of *A Common Word Between Us and You* and participates regularly in the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Awad coordinated the formal release of the *Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi*, signed by over 120 leading Muslim scholars and academics, which rejected the extremist teachings promoted by DAISH.

#### **Beydoun, Khaled**

Khaled A Beydoun is a scholar on Islamophobia, civil liberties and constitutional law. He lectures frequently and regularly writes for leading media outlets. His 2008 book, *American Islamophobia: The Roots and Rise of Fear* has been published to wide acclaim, and will be followed in 2023 with his new book, *The New Crusades: Islamophobia and the Global War on Muslims*. He serves as professor at the Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, and currently serves on the US Commission for Civil Rights. In a Twitter campaign, Beydoun asked his followers to "Boycott the 2022 Olympics in Beijing China—where a Uyghur Muslim genocide is currently taking place," and he has raised awareness and millions of dollars for humanitarian causes. Beydoun holds degrees from the University of Michigan, UCLA and Harvard.

#### **Khan, Salman**

Salman Khan is a pioneer of online learning, having founded *Khan Academy* in 2008. The online educational website features more than 5,500 mini-lectures, free of charge, to anyone in the world. The



# ذَالِكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَمْرَحُونَ أَدْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فِئْسَ مَثْوًى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

That was because you were wont to rejoice on the earth in things other than the Truth, and that you were wont to be insolent. ☞ Enter the gates of Hell, to dwell therein: and evil is (this) abode of the arrogant! ☞

*The Believer, 75-76*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

videos are hosted on *YouTube* and teach a variety of subjects, such as: mathematics, history, healthcare, medicine, finance, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, economics, cosmology, organic chemistry, American civics, art history microeconomics, and computer science. Khan published his international best seller, *The One World School House*, in October 2012. As of July 2023, the Khan Academy channel on *YouTube* has 7.94 million subscribers, and its videos have been viewed more than 2 billion times.

## **Magid, Imam Mohammed**

An outstanding figure in interfaith activities, Imam Magid is the Executive Director and Imam of the ADAMS Centre in Virginia, and former President of ISNA. He is an advocate for youth and women, and serves on the FBI's Muslim, Sikh, and Arab Advisory Committee. In recognition of his efforts toward interfaith bridge-building, Imam Magid was among the ten Washingtonians of the Year in 2010 presented with Washingtonian Magazine's award for outstanding leadership. He has served as an advisor to many in Washington, including President Obama.

## **Mogahed, Dalia**

Dalia Mogahed is the Director of Research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding. She was previously a Senior Analyst and Executive Director at the Gallup Centre for Muslim Studies, as well as

the Director of the Muslim West Facts Project. Former President Obama appointed her to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, making her the first hijab-wearing Muslim woman to hold a White House advisory 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*.

## **Sarsour, Linda**

Linda Sarsour is an American-Palestinian human rights and social justice activist, and a campaigner against increasing Islamophobia in the United States. Sarsour is the Executive Director of the Arab American Association of New York and Senior Strategist for the Campaign to Take on Hate. She is also the Co-founder of the Muslim Democratic Club of New York, the first of its kind in New York City. Her numerous distinctions include: the White House's Champion of Change, the New York City Council's Shirley Chisholm Women of Distinction Award, and CAIR's inaugural American Muslim of the Year. Linda has also written for—and been featured in—local, national, and international media on issues related to Arab-Muslim American communities, immigration, criminal justice issues, and Middle East affairs. In March 2020, Simon & Schuster published Sarsour's autobiography, *We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders*.

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### BAHRAIN

#### **Al-Zayani, Afnan**

Afnan Al-Zayani is the CEO of Al-Zayani Commercial Services (AZCS), a multimillion dollar corporation. 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. In 2010, she received the Leadership in Public Life Award from Vital Voices, a women's empowerment organisation. In 2016, she was honoured by the IWEC Foundation at the annual conference in Belgium.

### EGYPT

#### **Helal, Lobna**

Lobna Helal was appointed by a Presidential decree as Deputy Governor of Egypt's Central Bank in 2016 after being the first woman to serve on its board as Second Deputy Governor from 2011- 2013. Helal also holds key positions such as the Deputy Chair of the Egyptian Banking Institute and recently joined Telecom Egypt's board.

### IRAN

#### **Ansari, Anousheh**

Anousheh Ansari is Chairman, CEO, and Co-founder of Prodea Systems, a private US-based company offering technological solutions for businesses. In 2006, she became the first privately funded woman, and first Iranian, to explore space. In 2015, the National Space Society awarded Ansari the Space Pioneer Award for her service to the space community. She received an Honorary Doctorate of Science from Utah Valley University. In 2017, Ansari co-represented Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi at the 89th Academy Awards, accepting the Oscar on his behalf for his film *The Salesman*. Farhadi did not attend himself due to his opposition to President Trump's immigration ban.

### JORDAN

#### **Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal**

Abu-Ghazaleh is the Chairman and Founder of the Organization by his name. He is credited with introducing the concept of intellectual property to 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 who is not from one of the G8 countries to be listed in the IP Hall of Fame in Chicago, US.

### KUWAIT

#### **Al-Bahar, Shaikha**

Shaikha Al-Bahar is the Deputy CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait, valued at over \$100 billion in total assets. She is in charge of loans, investment banking, marketing, and treasury. Al-Bahar is also Chairperson of Al-Watany Bank of Egypt, Vice Chair at NBK Capital (a subsidiary of the National Bank of Kuwait), and sits on the board of the International Bank of Qatar. She studied at Harvard Business School, Stanford, Duke, and the University of California.

#### **Al-Ghunaim, Maha**

Al-Ghunaim is a pivotal figure in Arab and Kuwaiti 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 onto the London Stock Exchange in 2008, making it the first Kuwaiti company to be listed there. The firm is also listed on the Kuwait, Dubai, and Bahrain stock exchanges.

### MOROCCO

#### **Bouhia, Dr Hynd**

Dr Hynd is a strategic entrepreneur and founded the Believe Act Lead Method to empower women to become great leaders by creating wealth and making an impact. She has accumulated more than 20 years of professional experience in high-level leadership positions. She was nominated by Forbes among the 100 most influential women, in the Arab Women in Business list, and honoured as a member of the Johns Hopkins Society of Scholars (2018). With a Har-

vard PhD in engineering, she started her career at the World Bank in Washington before joining Morocco's Prime Minister and Casablanca Stock Exchange as the Managing Director. Dr Hynd is the author of two motivational and inspirational books about women empowerment.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **Al-Amoudi, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali**

Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali Al-Amoudi has a portfolio of businesses in oil, mining, agriculture, hotels, hospitals, finance, operations, and maintenance in various countries including Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia. His charitable and philanthropic works are substantial, especially in Ethiopia. In November 2017, Al-Amoudi, alongside several Saudi princes and other billionaires, was detained in an anti-corruption crackdown. He was eventually released in January 2019.

### **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. Revenue of his company is estimated at \$6 billion. His company is responsible for construction projects in the Al-Haram Al-Makki in Mecca, such as the expansion and the *jamarat* projects. The group has been involved with several major projects in the country, including the King Abdullah Economic City, the King Abdul Aziz International Airport, and the King Saud University. In November 2017, he was detained, along with several Saudi princes and billionaires, on an anti-corruption drive. He spent three months at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh before being released in January 2018.

### **HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal Al-Saud**

Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal is a member of the Saudi royal family who built his fortune through entrepreneurship and investment in real estate and the stock market. His philanthropic contributions are wide-ranging and include a contribution of \$20 million to found the Centre for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University, which remains one of the key institutions globally working on Christian-Muslim relations. In November 2017, he was one of several Saudi princes and billionaires detained on an anti-corruption drive. He spent three months at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh before being released in January 2018. In April 2020, Al-waleed Philanthropies allocated \$30m to the battle against COVID-19.

### **Olayan, Lubna**

Lubna Olayan is internationally recognized as Saudi Arabia's top businesswoman. She was 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 was reappointed in January 2023 to serve a three-year term at Saudi British Bank.

### **Al-Suhaimi, Sarah**

Al-Suhaimi is the first woman to chair the Saudi Arabian stock exchange (Tadawul), which is the largest in the Middle East. Additionally, she holds the position of CEO and Member of the Board of Directors of NCB Capital, where, in 2014, she was tasked with reviving the flagging investment bank and raising morale in the workforce. Within two years she had reversed NCB Capital prospects and returned it to growth. Previously, she held the position of CIO at Jadwa Investment.

## SUDAN

### **Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed "Mo"**

Dr Mohamed Ibrahim—more commonly known as Mo Ibrahim—is a Sudanese-born entrepreneur currently based in the UK. A successful telecommunications businessman, he founded one of Africa's largest cellular phone companies, Celtel. He came into prominence for establishing the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership in 2017, an award that provides the recipient a \$5 million initial payment, plus \$200,000 annually for life. The prize was conceived as a way to promote good governance and curb corruption by African leaders seeking financial security when they leave office. The prize is believed to be the world's largest, surpassing the \$1.3 million Nobel Peace Prize.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### **Alabbar, Mohamed Ben Ali**

Mohamed Ben Ali Alabbar 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 HH Sheikh Moham-



med bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, and is the Managing Director of Emaar, one of the world's largest real estate companies.

### **Al Gurg, Raja**

Raja Al Gurg is Managing Director of the Easa Saleh Al-Gurg Group LLC (ESAG). Al-Gurg is the first Emirati woman on the board of HSBC Bank Middle East Limited and is also on the advisory board of Coutts Bank, the wealth management division of the Royal Bank of Scotland Group. She also plays an active role in several philanthropic, social, and women's societies, including serving as Deputy Chair of the Dubai Healthcare City Authority and President of the Dubai Business Women Council. Her autobiography: *Raja Al Gurg - An Autobiography* was published at the end of 2019. In 2022, she was appointed as Honorary Pro-Chancellor at Heriot Watt University

### **Al-Jaber, Fatima**

Al-Jaber is an Emirati businesswoman and Chief Operating Officer of the Al-Jaber Group. She supervizes more than 50,000 employees and manages around \$4.9 billion in assets. She is also a regular speaker at economic 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 received many awards and has been featured in Forbes and Arabian Business.

### **Al-Rostamani, Hana**

Al-Rostamani is the Group CEO of the First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) and was responsible for turning the bank's focus towards a digital-first approach. Previously, she held the position of Independent Director in Emirates Integrated Telecommunication Company (Du) and Vice-chairperson of the Emirates Institute for Banking and Financial Services. She has over 20 years experience in the financial world and was ranked third in Forbes Middle East's Power Business Women 2022 list.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

### **NIGERIA**

#### **Dangote, Alhaji Aliko**

Dangote is the Chairman and CEO of the Dangote Group, the largest industrial group in Nigeria. He is the richest man in Africa in 2022, with an estimated

net worth of \$19.8 billion. In January 2009, Dangote was honoured for being the leading provider of employment in the Nigerian construction industry. In 2011, Dangote was also awarded Nigeria's second highest honour, Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) by the President of Nigeria. As a philanthropist, he has donated to the National Mosque, the Presidential Library, and a host of charities. In March 2020, Dangote donated 200 million Naira towards curbing the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria.

---

## *Asia*

---

### **BRUNEI**

#### **HM Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah**

##### **Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah**

HM Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah has been the Sultan of Brunei since 1967. Following the death of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 2016, the Sultan is the wealthiest monarch in the world. His official residence has over 1,800 rooms and he maintains a car collection in the thousands. He owns many properties (via the Brunei Investment Authority) in the UK including the famous Dorchester Hotel. He is estimated to be worth \$20 billion.

### **INDONESIA**

#### **Indrawati, Sri Mulyani**

Sri Mulyani Indrawati is one of a few Indonesian policymakers with an international profile. During her time as Finance Minister, Southeast Asia's largest economy became one of the 20 leading economies in the world and one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, partly thanks to a combination of sound economic policies and a stable political environment. She was appointed Managing Director of the World Bank in 2010, where she served until 2016.

#### **Thohir, Erick**

Erick Thohir is an Indonesian businessman and politician who has served as Indonesia's Minister of State Owned Enterprises and as a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) since 2019. He founded the Mahaka Group, a conglomeration that focuses on sports and entertainment in the print, radio, and television media. He also owns solely and in partnership several football and basketball teams in

Indonesia and abroad. He is the president of SEABA (Southeast Asian Basketball Association).

---

## Europe

---

### TÜRKIYE

#### Sabancı, Güler

Sabancı is a renowned, award-winning Turkish businesswoman and the Chairperson of the family-controlled Sabancı Holding, a \$25 billion industrial and financial corporation, the second largest in Türkiye. 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. She was recently honoured with the David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award for her philanthropic contributions.

#### Ulukaya, Hamdi

Hamdi Ulukaya is the founder and CEO of the multi-billion dollar yoghurt business, Chobani. He immigrated to the USA in 1994, purchased a yoghurt factory in 2005 and developed his own recipe based on his Kurdish ancestry and the eastern Turkish farm he grew up on. He has developed a humane working culture for his 2,000 plus employees. He focused on employing from the local community as well as refugees and has given his employees a 10% stake in the company. He has won numerous awards.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### Aziz, Asif

Asif Aziz is the founder and CEO of Criterion Capital, which manages a London property portfolio. He is also Chair of the Aziz Foundation, which runs a postgraduate scholarships programme for British Muslims, having awarded over 550 scholarships to

---

## Altafsir.com

[www.altafsir.com](http://www.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.

Over  
**161** MILLION  
visitors to [altafsir.com](http://altafsir.com)

It was begun in 2001 by the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, Jordan, being the brainchild of HRH 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 (asbâb al-nuzûl); 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](http://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.

In 2013, the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought put up a sister website with a special emphasis for mobile devices. You can now read tafsir wherever you go by visiting [www. GreatTafsirs.com](http://www.GreatTafsirs.com) and downloading the app for Android or iOS.

date across 50+ British universities. The Foundation has also partnered with organizations in sectors where Muslims are traditionally underrepresented, like journalism, to offer over 100 paid internships. The Foundation is also behind the high-profile Ramadan Lights street display in London's West End, the Trafalgar Square Iftar and the opening of the Piccadilly Prayer Space in the Trocadero in central London. It also works to raise awareness of Islamophobia and held a gala event to mark the UN Day to Combat Islamophobia. The Foundation strives to ensure that British Muslims have equal opportunities to engage and contribute to wider society.

#### **Issa, Mohsin and Issa, Zuber**

Mohsin and Zuber Issa, grew up in humble circumstances to parents who had migrated to the UK from India. They started working in a garage and then acquired petrol stations, owning over 6000 forecourts (EG group), before acquiring the retail chain Asda and its 600-stores-plus, bringing it back into British ownership. They are estimated to be worth over £5 billion.

#### **Randeree, Shabir**

Randeree is a hugely successful entrepreneur and philanthropist and was recognized for his efforts with a CBE. He is the Chairman of DCD Group, Deputy Chairman of Al Baraka Bank South Africa and Founder Director at IBB Bank plc. He is the Chair of Mosaic (founded by King Charles III) and involved in a number of other educational institutes. He has served on government task forces and in 2016 was inaugurated as the Chancellor of the University of East London. In 2020 he was elected the new Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Woolf Institute.

---

## *North America*

---

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### **El-Erian, Mohamed**

El-Erian's career started at the International Monetary Fund, where he worked for 15 years and served as deputy director. He also served as Managing Director at Citigroup in London and PIMCO, a global investment management firm and one of the world's largest bond investors, where he was CEO and CIO. He is currently Chief Economic Adviser at Allianz, the world's largest insurance company, and President of Queens' College, Cambridge University. El-Erian contributes to major economic publications such as the *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg*, *Business Insider*, *CNN*, and *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy* named him on the list of the "top 100 Global Thinkers" for four years in a row. He has authored two *New York Times* bestselling books, sits on several boards, and received various professional and philanthropic awards.

#### **Khan, Shahid**

Khan moved to the USA from Pakistan in 1967, aged 16, graduated in Industrial Engineering and since then has gone on to become a billionaire businessman. His main company is Flex-N-Gate, which manufactures components for companies in the automobile industry. It currently has a revenue of over \$6 billion and a workforce of 13,000 employees. He is also the owner of the American national football league team, the Jacksonville Jaguars and the English football team, Fulham. More recently he has launched All Elite Wrestling, a professional wrestling entertainment company and is a major financial backer of Black News Channel, a 24-hour cable news channel.



---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### EGYPT

#### **El-Baz, Farouk**

Farouk El-Baz is a geologist who worked with NASA on the selection of landing sites on the moon and the training of Apollo astronauts in visual observations and photography. He is well-known for applying satellite images to groundwater exploration in arid lands. The Geological Society of America established two awards in his honour: the Farouk El-Baz Award for Desert Research (1999); and the Farouk El-Baz Student Research Award (2007). He has received numerous honours and awards, including Egypt's Order of Merit (First Class). El-Baz ranked number 51 in the Power 100 of Arabian Business. In 2019, the International Astronomical Union named an asteroid after Farouk El-Baz in recognition of his outstanding scientific contributions.

#### **El-Naggar, Dr Zaghloul**

Dr 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 in geology. He has published close to 200 academic articles and scientific studies. He also works for the Arab Development Institute.

### IRAN

#### **Khademhosseini, Professor Ali**

Dr Khademhosseini is the CEO and Director of the Terasaki Institute in Los Angeles, one of the leaders in researching the use of nanotechnology for minimally invasive medical procedures. Formerly, Khademhosseini was the Levi Knight Professor of Bioengineering, Chemical Engineering, and Radiology at UCLA and a Professor at Harvard Medical School. He is the author of more than 650 peer-reviewed journal articles, editorials and review papers and holds more than 70 patents. He is the recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE); and every year since 2014 Khademhosseini has been selected by Thomson Reuters as one of the World's Most Influential Minds as

a Highly Cited Researcher. He has been awarded many more honours, such as the Mustafa Prize, the Pioneers of Miniaturization Prize from the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) and the Clemson Award of the Society for Biomaterials.

#### **Shokrollahi, Professor M Amin**

Dr Shokrollahi is a renowned Iranian mathematician working in the field of information communication. He is the inventor of tornado codes and one of the principal developers of raptor codes and chordal codes, which are specifically designed for communication on electrical wires between chips. Shokrollahi holds over 150 patents in the area of information transmission and was the Chief Scientist of Digital Fountain, which Qualcomm Inc acquired in 2009. He is the CEO and Founder of Kandou, a research firm in Switzerland specializing in improving speed and efficiency in communication between microchips. Shokrollahi has won multiple awards for his work, including the IEEE IT Best Paper Award (2002), the ISSCC Jan van Vessel Award (2014), and the Mustafa Prize (2017).

### JORDAN

#### **Dajani, Professor Rana**

Rana Dajani is a Professor of molecular biology and a powerful advocate for science education for women. She has also founded the initiative, 'We Love Reading', which develops changemakers through reading aloud. This earned her the Jacobs Social Entrepreneurship Award 2018. In 2017 she was selected by Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study as a fellow of the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University. Her awards include: the UN Science, Technology and Innovation Award 2019, the UNHCR Nansen refugee award 2020, and the Schwab Social Entrepreneur Award 2021.

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **Al-Namankany, Dr Abeer**

Dr Al-Namankany made history when she developed a new standard for measuring patient anxiety and treating it with drug-free psychotherapy, thereby protecting patients from the risks of general anaesthesia and the side-effects of sedatives. She is the winner of

six distinguished clinical and research awards from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry, the Emirates Medical Association, and others. In addition to her brilliant medical career, Dr Al-Namankany is also a social activist and a defender of women's and children's rights.

#### **Sindi, Dr Hayat**

Dr Hayat Sindi is a pioneer in the field of medical science with a number of significant groundbreaking scientific contributions. She is Advisor to the President of Saudi Arabia's Islamic Development Bank Group on Science, Technology and Innovation. She was the first female member of the Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia, the first Saudi to complete her studies at Cambridge University in the field of biotechnology, and the first Arab to complete a doctoral degree in the field. She was ranked by Arabian Business as the 20th most influential Arab in the world and the 9th most influential Arab woman in 2012. Sindi has been appointed by UNESCO as a Goodwill Ambassador in recognition of her efforts in promoting science education in the Middle East. Her other distinctions include membership at the Clinton Global Initiative 2014 and receiving the Leadership in Civil Society Prize.

---

## *Asia*

---

### **INDIA**

#### **Hasan, Dr Hashima**

Dr Hashima Hasan is a key scientist behind the James Webb Space Telescope project, which is sending the earliest images of the universe we currently have. Educated at Aligarh, Mumbai and Oxford, she is widely published and has received numerous awards. She joined NASA in 1994 and has worked on various programmes cementing her reputation as one of the top scientists in the organization.

### **INDONESIA**

#### **Afifa, Dr Nadhira Nuraini**

Dr Nadhira Afifa is an Indonesian medical doctor and public health consultant graduated from Harvard University. She focuses on health and nutrition education to the general public through her *YouTube* and Instagram accounts as well as contributing to na-

tional news media. She works on multidimensional issues from child nutrition, poverty, to disaster management. Her interest is centred on the burden of disease in developing countries. She is currently in residence at the University of Indonesia.

#### **Mumpuni, Tri**

Tri Mumpuni spent 30 years improving rural communities in Indonesia through 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 villages across Indonesia and in the Philippines. She was presented with the Award for Community Power at the Ashden Awards in 2012. Mumpuni is the Executive Director of IBEKA, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote community development via the provision of local energy, mainly hydroelectricity, and also clean water. She pioneered a community private partnership model to build small power plants equally owned by the community and private sector, and is responsible for introducing an energy garden to remote villagers. In 2021, the President of Indonesia, Mr. Joko Widodo, appointed her as a member of the Board of Governors of the Indonesian Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN).

### **MALAYSIA**

#### **Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar**

Dr Shukor, an orthopaedic surgeon by profession, was the first Malaysian in space. He was selected as one of two astronauts to be trained at Star City in Russia and was subsequently selected to be the astronaut to further Malaysia's Angkasawan programme, which sent him to the International Space Station in 2007. Images of him praying and celebrating Eid increased his popularity in the Muslim world. His launch also prompted the Malaysian National Fatwa Council to issue specific rulings regarding observance of religious obligations (praying and fasting) while in space. He is the author of best-selling books including *My Way of Parenting* and *49th Rule*. Dr Shukor is currently at the National University of Malaysia UKM as a Research Fellow focusing on global issues like climate change, world hunger and humanitarian aid.

## PAKISTAN

### **Professor Atta-Ur-Rahman**

Professor Atta-Ur-Rahman is one of Pakistan's most distinguished scientists. After obtaining his Masters degree in organic chemistry from Karachi University, he completed his doctoral degree at Cambridge University, where he remains a Fellow. He helped develop the higher education landscape in Pakistan and has received the highest national awards. In 1999, he became the first Muslim scientist to win the UNESCO Science Prize. In 2013, in recognition of his work in the field of science, the largest Malaysian university, Universiti Teknologi Mara, named its Research Institute of Natural Products after Professor Atta-ur-Rahman. In 2014 he was awarded the International Cooperation Award, the highest award of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In 2016, he was elected as Emeritus Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, thereby becoming the first scientist from the Islamic world to be granted this honour. The same year, Professor Rahman was appointed Co-Chairman of a United Nations Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation covering the member countries of UNESCAP.

### **Saif, Dr Umar**

An award-winning scientist, entrepreneur, innovator, and a tech tycoon, Dr Saif studied at Cambridge University and was a core member of the \$50 million Project Oxygen at MIT. He created the first startup incubators in Pakistan: the Saif Center of Innovation. He is also the founding Vice Chancellor of the Information Technology University in Punjab and is one of the main forces behind the IT ecosystem in Pakistan. The MIT Technology Review named Saif in its list of the "World's Top Young Innovators for the year 2011", and he was named "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum in 2010. In recognition of his services to the country, in 2014 the Government of Pakistan conferred on him the Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Star of Excellence), one of the highest civilian awards in Pakistan. In 2019 he received an investment directly from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop innovative Artificial Intelligence models for data collection.

### **Siddiqi, Irfan**

Irfan Siddiqi is an award-winning pioneering scientist who is best-known for the development of the Josephson bifurcation amplifier. He was born in Karachi and moved to the USA where he studied at Co-

lumbia, Harvard and Yale universities. He is Director of the Advanced Quantum Testbed and Professor of Physics at the Quantum Nanoscience Laboratory (established by him) and the Department of Physics at the University of California, Berkeley. In 2021, he received the Joseph F Keithley Award.

## THAILAND

### **Dahlan, Professor Dr Winai**

Professor Dr Winai Dahlan is the Founding Director of the Halal Science Center Chulalongkorn University (HSC) in Thailand, named the best innovation in the halal industry and the world's first halal science institution by Malaysia's Halal Journal. HSC promotes halal industry and commerce through digital platforms, namely SPHERE, HALPLUS, and scientific regional cooperation with halal laboratories in Indonesia, Malaysia and worldwide. Dr Winai Dahlan has produced many intellectual properties and written more than 50 books and several thousand articles on science and nutrition.

---

## *Europe*

---

## FRANCE

### **Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno Abd al Haqq**

Dr Guiderdoni is an astrophysicist and French convert to Islam. A specialist in galaxy formation and evolution, he has published more than 150 papers and organized many conferences on these subjects. Guiderdoni serves as Director of the Observatory of Lyon. Besides his extensive writings on science, he has also published around 80 papers on Islamic theology and mysticism and the relationship between science and religion, and is now Director of the Islamic Institute for Advanced Studies.

## GERMANY

### **Şahin, Dr Uğur**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

**Gelenbe, Dr Erol**

Erol Gelenbe studied in Türkiye and the USA, and held Professorships at the University of Liege (Belgium), the University of Paris-Saclay and Paris-Descartes, and named Chairs at NJIT, Duke, the University of Central Florida in the USA and Imperial College London. A pioneer in the field of modelling and performance evaluation of computer networks, the inventor of the random neural network, the G-networks, and the Cognitive Packet Network, he is currently Professor in the Institute of Theoretical and Applied Informatics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and Chair of the Academia Europaea Informatics Section. Also affiliated with the University of Cote d'Azur, CNRS I3S (Nice), Research Professor at Yasar University, Izmir, Türkiye, and Honorary Professor University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, he has graduated 95 PhDs and received multiple fellowships, awards and honours for his work

**Sancar, Dr Aziz**

Sancar was co-awarded (along with Tomas Lindahl and Paul Modrich) the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2015 for his work on DNA repair. His contributions over the years have shed light on the processes of ageing, causes of cancer and how cells work. Sancar studied at Istanbul University before moving to the USA where he is currently Professor at the University of North Carolina. He is also a co-founder of a foundation which promotes Turkish culture and supports Turkish students in the USA (the Aziz & Gwen Sancar Foundation). He is the 2019 recipient of the Hyman L. Battle Distinguished Cancer Research Award.

**İmamoğlu, Dr Ataç**

İmamoğlu is an award-winning physicist whose alma maters include the Middle East Technical University in Istanbul and Stanford. He was Professor at the University of California and then the University of Stuttgart before becoming the head of the research group on Quantum Photonics, at ETHZ (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), Switzerland. His academic interests are quantum optics, semiconductor physics, and nonlinear optics.

**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. The Foundation partners with the Abdul Latif Jameel Foundation, a British charity which showcased the 1001 Inventions Global Touring Exhibition across the UK, United States, and Türkiye in 2010.

---

*North America*


---

## CANADA

**Ghilan, Dr Mohamed**

Mohamed Ghilan is a Canadian Muslim who has managed to combine a high degree of learning of modern science and traditional Islam. Born in Riyadh, to parents from Sudanese and Yemeni backgrounds, he attended high school and university after immigrating to Canada. In 2007 Mohamed began his full-time studies in the Islamic Tradition after having made connections with several Muslim scholars. In May 2015, Mohamed earned a PhD in neuroscience at the University of Victoria, where he studied synaptic plasticity in Huntington's disease, as well as the effects and molecular mechanisms of stress on the brain in Fragile X syndrome. He hopes his research can eventually be used to develop new therapies which can be used to assist individuals with movement disorders or intellectual disabilities.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Elgamal, Dr Taher**

Taher Elgamal, widely known as the "father of SSL (Secure Sockets Layer)", is a world-renowned, Egyptian-American cryptographer. In addition to being the driving force behind SSL, the technology used to secure web browsing online, his work is also used as the basis for Digital Signature Algorithm (DSA) adopted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology as the Digital Signature Standard (DSS).



He is a recipient of the RSA Conference 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award and received the 2019 Marconi Prize with Paul Kocher.

#### **Khan, Dr Mehmood**

Dr Mehmood Khan is the Chief Executive Officer and member of the board of directors of Life Biosciences. He was the former PepsiCo Vice Chairman and Chief Scientific Officer. He previously consulted for the Mayo Clinic on diabetes and other diseases and was President of Takeda Pharmaceuticals. He is one of the world's leading thinkers in food, nutrition, and innovation. Dr Khan sits on numerous boards.

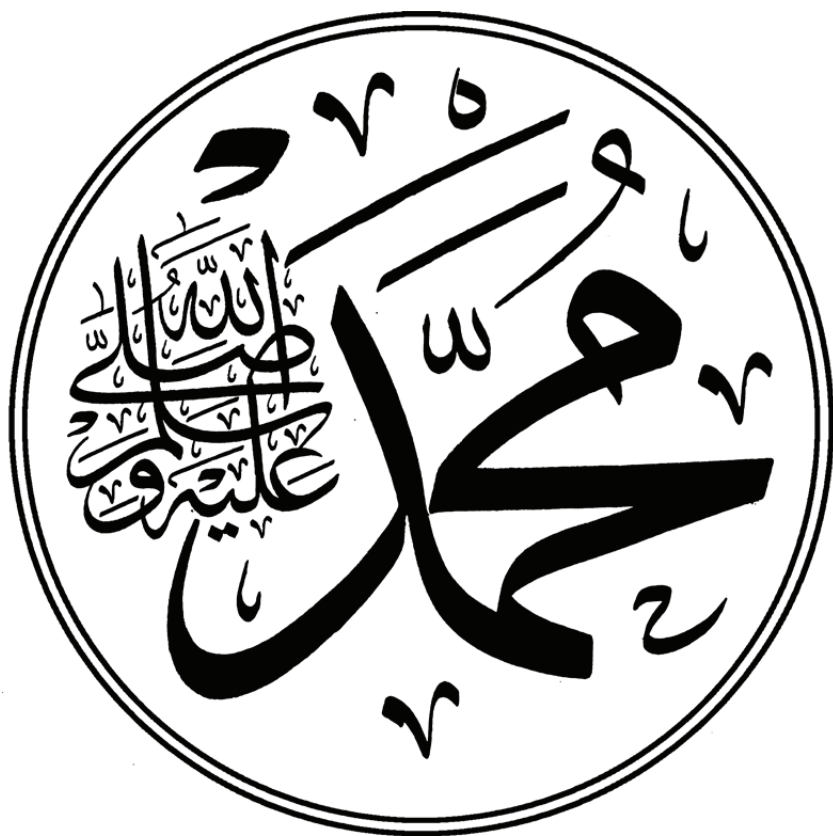
#### **Siddique, Professor Teepu**

Professor Siddique is a neurologist and scientist known for his ground-breaking discoveries concerning genetic and molecular abnormalities. He was head of the team that discovered the cause behind the mysterious and deadly disorder known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He studied at Dow Medical College in Karachi, where he earned his medical degree in 1973 before moving to the USA. He was a Professor of neurology and cell and molec-

ular biology at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine before becoming director of the university's division of neuromuscular medicine.

#### **Ying, Professor Jackie**

Professor Jackie Y Ying is a pioneer in the use of nanotechnology for human health. She heads the NanoBio Lab at the Agency for Science, Technology and Research in Singapore. She received her PhD from Princeton University and was Professor of Chemical Engineering at MIT before becoming the Executive Director of the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN), Singapore. Her interdisciplinary research is focused on nanostructured materials and systems for catalytic and biomedical applications. She has authored over 390 articles and has over 170 patents issued or pending. In 2017, she was awarded the Abdeali Taybali Lifetime Achievement Award and was also named a Fellow of the United States National Academy of Inventors (NAI). In 2018 she was awarded the TÜBA Academy Prize, in 2021 she was elected to the National Academy of Engineering and in 2023 she won the King Faisal Prize in Science.



---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### ALGERIA

#### **Mosteghanemi, Ahlam**

Ahlam Mosteghanemi is a best-selling author who has won numerous prizes, including the Naguib Mahfouz Prize for *Memory in the Flesh*, a novel about Algeria's struggle against foreign domination and the problems that plagued the emerging nation after its independence. Written in Arabic, the book has sold over a million copies. She earned her PhD at the Sorbonne in France and now lives in Beirut. She is the first contemporary Arab author to sell millions of copies of her work and dominate book charts for years in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, and the UAE. In 2016, she was named UNESCO Artist for Peace. She has over 16 million social media followers.

### EGYPT

#### **Al-Aswany, Alaa**

Alaa Al-Aswany is the recipient of many distinguished international literary honours and awards. His novels are acclaimed in the field of contemporary literature, selling millions of copies in three dozen languages and adapted into film and theatre performances. Al-Aswany reached international literary acclaim with his ground-breaking 2002 novel *The Yacoubian Building*. Through the prism of a fashionable downtown Cairo building, he exposes the corrupt dealmaking and exploitative relationships of power in Mubarak's Egypt. His latest novel *The Republic, As If*, published in 2018, is set during the events of Egypt's 2011 revolution. Al-Aswany is the author of 17 books—novels, short story collections, and compendiums of his articles. He has taught and lectured at universities and leading cultural institutions around the world. A leading democracy advocate, his op-eds have appeared in influential publications and he also pens a weekly column for Deutsche Welle's Arabic news site.

#### **Badreya, Sayed**

Badreya is an Egyptian-born actor who played significant roles in a number of Hollywood films such as *Iron Man* and *The Dictator*. His production company

Zoom in Focus emerged with the purpose of showing the world the Arab-American story. Much of his efforts in this regard have been published in prominent news outlets such as *The New York Times*, BBC, ABC, and Fox News.

#### **Namira, Hamza (new)**

Hamza Namira is an Egyptian singer and a songwriter who became known as the "Voice of the Revolution" after the 2011 Arab Spring in Egypt. His songs focus on subjects related to sociopolitical, humanist interest, hope, alienation and resistance against oppression. Namira enjoys a wide following and recently celebrated 1 billion views on his YouTube channel, in addition to having almost 19 million followers on different social media outlets. He lived in exile after being accused of opposing the Egyptian regime but recently returned to Egypt where he settled and hosts concerts. Namira also participates in philanthropy working alongside organizations like Human Appeal International and United Muslim Relief.

#### **Waked, Amr**

Amr Waked is an Egyptian actor who has become a crossover star in Hollywood. Politically active with over 7 million Twitter followers, Waked was involved in the street protests that eventually toppled Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and was also active in the 2013 protests that led to the overthrow of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi. In 2019 an Egyptian military court sentenced him, in absentia, to eight years in prison for "publishing fake news and insulting state institutions". Since late 2021 Waked has been producing and presenting an award-winning documentary series on Al-Jazeera called 'Decoded' (*Dahaleez* in Arabic) which has racked up millions of views on YouTube. He currently lives in Spain.

#### **El-Wakil, Abdel-Wahed**

Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil is an international architect and a contemporary icon of Islamic architecture. A student of the famous Hassan Fathy, El-Wakil has designed over 50 buildings around the world, including one for King Charles. He is the two-time recipient of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture and received first prize for the design of contemporary mosque architecture in Riyadh.

## IRAN

### Alidoosti, Taraneh

Taraneh Alidoosti was named as one of the best actresses of the decade by *Film Monthly* magazine and was the youngest person ever to win the Crystal Simorgh for Best Actress. She starred in *The Salesman* which won the Oscar for best Foreign Language Film in 2017. She boasts over 8 million followers on different social media networks. She recently was imprisoned briefly after taking part in demonstrations against the Iranian government.

### Farhadi, Asghar

Asghar Farhadi is an award-winning Iranian film director and screenwriter who explores the depths and complications of everyday relationships and themes of jealousy and trust in an evocative way and often includes strong female leads. He has won two Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film for his films *A Separation* (2012) (becoming the first Iranian to win an Oscar) and *The Salesman* (2016), as well as receiving a Golden Globe Award and numerous other awards. He famously did not attend the 2017 Academy Awards citing President Trump's travel ban as the reason. He sent two famous Iranian Americans to receive the Oscar on his behalf. In 2021, he received the Cannes Film Festival's Grand Prix for his film *A Hero*.

### Majidi, Majid

Majid Majidi is an Iranian film director whose films have won many international awards. His *Children of Heaven* was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the Academy Awards. In August 2015, he released the first part of an intended trilogy on the life of the Prophet, with *Muhammad: The Messenger of God* being the most expensive film in Iranian movie history (\$40 million). His film *Sun Children* was shortlisted for the 2021 Oscars best foreign film.

### 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. In 2014, Nazeri received France's National Order of Merit.

## LEBANON

### Assaf, Roger

Roger Assaf is a prominent Lebanese director, actor, and playwright. With his actress wife Hanane Haggi-Ali, he co-founded the Al-Hakawati Theatre Company and the Shams Cultural Cooperative for Youth in Theatre and Culture, an organization providing underprivileged individuals with a forum for self-expression through drama.

## MOROCCO

### Lalami, Laila

Laila Lalami is an award-winning novelist and essayist. Her many books include *The Moor's Account*, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction and *The Other Americans*, a finalist for the National Book Award in Fiction. Her opinion pieces and political commentary appear regularly in the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, and *The New York Times*. She has received a British Council Fellowship, a Fulbright Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, and has been honoured by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader. She is currently Professor of creative writing at the University of California at Riverside as well as being a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University.

## PALESTINE

### Al-Barghouti, Dr Tamim

Dr Tamim Al-Barghouti is a Palestinian poet and columnist who has a weekly programme on AJ+ entitled 'Ma' Tamim'. Al-Barghouti has been nicknamed the "Poet of Jerusalem" and has been compared to the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish. Tamim's rousing poetry is eagerly anticipated on social media. Al-Barghouti has a PhD in political science from Boston University and he has taught at the American University in Cairo, the Free University of Berlin and Georgetown University. His 2007 critically acclaimed poem 'Fil-Qudsi' (In Jerusalem), which he presented on the Emirati television show 'Amir al-Shu'ara' (Prince of Poets), has been watched by millions. His first book, *In Jerusalem and Other Poems* was translated into English and published by Simon & Schuster.

## QATAR

### HH Sheikha Al-Mayassa Al-Thani

Sheikha Al-Mayassa is the Chairperson of Reach Out To Asia, an NGO under the Qatar Foundation that contributes to the development of societies in Asia, including the Middle East. Its specific area of emphasis is 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.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### Al-Esa, Majed

Al-Esa has produced several music videos which have gone viral online. The video 'Hwages' highlights issues faced by women in Saudi Arabia and has already more than 65 million views on YouTube, bringing the total number of views of all his videos to over 248 million. His work is resonating with the younger generation of Saudis and his videos are causing concern in more conservative circles.

## SUDAN

### Aboulela, Leila

Leila Aboulela FRSL was born in Cairo, grew up in Khartoum and moved in her mid-20s to Scotland. She is the author of six novels among them *River Spirit*, *The Translator*, *Minaret* and *Lyrics Alley*, Fiction Winner of the Scottish Book Awards. Leila's life was filled with multi-cultural influences, which she often portrays in her writing, featuring migrant Muslims facing struggles in the West. She is a winner of the Caine Prize for African Writing and her story collection, *Elsewhere, Home* won the Saltire Fiction Book of the Year Award. Her books have been translated into 15 languages and her plays *The Mystic Life*, *The Lion of Chechnya* and others were broadcast on BBC Radio.

---

## 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 Sekou Toure. His music is very popular in the Francophone world, and more broadly in Europe. After a 40-plus-year career and having produced over 25 albums, Keita released his final album 'Un Autre Blanc' in October 2018.

## NIGER

### Souleymane, Mahamadou

Mahamadou Souleymane, known as Mdou Moc-tar, is a Tuareg songwriter, musician and actor from Agadez, Niger who became famous through a music trading network of cell phones and memory cards in West Africa. He is one of the first musicians to perform modern electronic adaptations of Tuareg guitar music. He reached a global audience when Sahel Sounds released his music on the Music from Saharan Cellphones: Volume 1 compilation. His fifth studio album 'Ilana' (The Creator), released in 2019 to international acclaim, has been called "the most fiery psych-rock of the 21st century" and one of "the 25 best psychedelic rock albums of the 2010s". He also has the starring role in the 2015 film *Akounak Tedalat Taba Tazoughai*, which translates as "Rain the Colour of Blue with a Little Red in It". It is the world's first feature film in a Tuareg language.

## 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 Goodwill Ambassador. In 2005, N'Dour received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary World Music Album for his album Egypt. In 2011, N'Dour was awarded an honorary doctoral degree in music from Yale University. In 2013, N'Dour won a share of Sweden's Polar Music Prize for promoting understanding between faiths as well as for his music.



---

## SOMALIA

### **Abdulmajid, Iman**

Iman Abdulmajid was born Zara Mohamed Abdulmajid in Mogadishu, Somalia in 1955. She is a super-model, entrepreneur, and activist. She became a muse to many prominent designers, including Halston, Gianni Versace, Calvin Klein, Issey Miyake and Donna Karan. Iman started her own cosmetics firm in 1994, focusing on difficult-to-find shades for women and built the company into a \$25-million-a-year business. She has also appeared in several TV series and films. In 2010, she received a Fashion Icon lifetime achievement award from the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA). Iman is also actively involved in a number of charitable endeavours including the Enough Project to end the global trade in conflict minerals and played a key part in the public campaign against blood diamonds. She was married to David Bowie from 1992 until his death in 2016.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### **Bhikha, Zain**

Zain Bhikha is a South African singer-songwriter and a pioneer performer of English *nasheed* songs. He is a much-loved household name amongst Muslims worldwide. He is also known for his collaborative efforts with other prominent Muslim entertainers, including Yusuf Islam and Dawud Wharmsby-Ali. Bhikha writes and directs plays as well as holding creative expression workshops conducted specifically within schools. He has released over ten albums in his career spanning 25 years.

## TANZANIA

### **Gurnah, Abdulrazak**

Abdulrazak Gurnah was awarded the 2021 Nobel Prize for Literature. He writes on culture and post-colonialism and is the author of ten novels, some of which have been shortlisted for the Booker prize, the Whitbread Prize and the Los Angeles Times Book Award. Born in Zanzibar, Gurnah emigrated to Britain as a student in 1968, at the age of 20, and went on to become Professor of English and Postcolonial Literatures at the University of Kent.

---

## Asia

---

## AFGHANISTAN

### **Hosseini, Khaled**

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965. Following the USSR invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, his family was granted political asylum in the United States. Hosseini earned a medical degree in 1993. In March 2001, while practising medicine, Hosseini began writing his first novel, *The Kite Runner*, which launched his literary career, and today, Hosseini is one of the most recognized and bestselling authors in the world. His books, *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, and *And the Mountains Echoed*, have been published in over 70 countries and sold more than 40 million copies worldwide. In 2006 Khaled was appointed a Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. Inspired by a trip he made to Afghanistan with the UNHCR, he later established The Khaled Hosseini Foundation, a nonprofit, which provides humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. He lives in Northern California with his wife and two children.

### **Sayed, Aryana**

A singer, songwriter and TV personality, Sayeed emigrated from Afghanistan with her family at the age of eight. Her family eventually settled in Switzerland where, at the age of 12, she was admitted to a music school where she would often perform with a choir. She released her first music single in 2008 and soon went on to become a household name in Afghanistan. She has won numerous music awards and, in 2017, she was named "Voice of Afghanistan" by the Afghanistan National Television and Radio Network. She continued her musical success with a television career, where she judged at talent shows, such as Afghan Star and The Voice of Afghanistan. She fled the country when US troops withdrew and the Taliban took control.

## 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. Back in 2010, Alim Qasimov was nominated for the United States National Public Radio's "50 great voices" series.

## CHINA

### Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang)

Haji Noor Deen Mi Guang Jiang is a renowned master of Arabic calligraphy. He was born in Yucheng in the Shandong Province of China in 1963. In 1997, Haji Noor Deen was awarded the Certificate of Arabic Calligrapher in Egypt, the first Chinese person to be honoured with this prestigious award. His work has been displayed—often as the first Chinese-Arabic artist—in galleries and museums around the world, including the British Museum, the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, the National Museum of Scotland, and Harvard University. His work focuses on writing Arabic using a combination of traditional Chinese calligraphic brushes with quick organic strokes to fuse both the Chinese and Arabic arts uniquely. After ten years of preparation and persistent practice, he completed the transcription of the entire Qur'an in the traditional Chinese Mus'haf style in 2021. Meanwhile, he published the 'Guiding Criterion for Calligraphy' in the Chinese Mus'haf in 2022.

## INDIA

### Azmi, Shabana

Azmi has been described as one of India's finest actresses of film, television, and theatre. She has been involved in over 120 movies, both in Hindi and foreign languages, many to international acclaim. During her extraordinary career, Azmi won the National Film Award for Best Actress five times and garnered several international honours. She has also received four Filmfare Awards. In addition to her successful career, Azmi is a social activist and supports issues such as women's rights, child survival, and fighting AIDS and injustice through the use of mainstream media. She was appointed as a Goodwill Ambassador for India by the United Nations Population Fund in 1998. She is also a member of Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament. She was conferred with an honorary doctorate by TERI University in 2014.

### Khan, Aamir

Aamir Khan is one of the leading stars of Bollywood. His phenomenal success has won him awards in India and acclaim abroad. His film *Lagaan* was nomi-

nated for Best Foreign Language Film at the Oscars while his venture *Dhoom 3* was the highest-grossing Bollywood film of all time. He is also a UNICEF brand ambassador, promoting child nutrition.

### 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 the soundtrack of *Slumdog Millionaire*, a movie for which he also received two Grammy Awards. He was named CNN IBN Indian of the Year for 2009. He is the Global Ambassador of the Stop TB Partnership, a World Health Organization project. A street was named in his honour in Markham, Ontario, Canada.

## INDONESIA

### Nadia, Asma

Asma Nadia is a prolific Indonesian author, songwriter, creative consultant for TV programmes and international public speaker. She has written over 70 books, including short stories, novels, and nonfiction on topics such as self-improvement, the family, and motivational books. Thirteen of her books have been made into movies, and seven books became TV series. She is also a producer of Islamic movies, a columnist for *Republika* daily newspaper and a hijab traveller who's been to 72 countries and 545 cities. Nadia also established the I Can Write Community which aims to help young writers and has opened 290 libraries around Indonesia for unprivileged children and youth.

### Rosa, Helvy Tiana

Helvy Tiana Rosa has written more than 70 books in various genres and is well known as one of the pioneers of the Islamic literary genre in Indonesia. Some of her works have been translated into other languages, and a few titles of hers have been made into movies. With a writing career spanning over 30 years, Helvy has won 50 national and international awards in literacy and women empowerment. Helvy founded the writing community Forum Lingkar Pena (FLP) in 1997 which since then has spread to over 200 cities in Indonesia and abroad and inspired many members to become professional and popular writers, especially in the Islamic literary genre.

### **Sulis**

Born in 1990 in Java, Indonesia, Sulis grew to fame as a protege of the famous *nasheed* singer, Haddad Alwi. At nine years old, she released her first album with her teacher, Alwi, called 'Cinta Rasul Vol. 1.'. Millions of copies were distributed across Indonesia and she quickly gained popularity nationwide. This was later followed by six more albums in the Cinta Rasul series. As part of the new wave of *nasheed* singers, she is known for incorporating guitars and drums in her tracks as backing instruments to her vocals.

## **KAZAKHSTAN**

### **Kudaibergen, Dimash**

Dimash (Dinmukhammed Kanatuly Kudaibergen) is a singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist with a wide vocal range, spanning from bass to soprano. He became an overnight sensation in China following an appearance at a popular singing show and has gained popularity since then, winning every major singing award in China, Russia and his home country of Kazakhstan. He's known for his charitable efforts in his own country and his hometown of Aktobe recently announced a museum dedicated in his honour.

## **MALAYSIA**

### **Hamidun, Hafiz**

Hafiz Hamidun is currently the most influential *nasheed* singer in the Far East. He is a multi-platinum award winner with approximately 4 million followers on social media. His albums have sold more than 5 million copies and have more than 300 million streams. Besides being a *nasheed* singer, Hamidun is also an award-winning music producer and music arranger.

### **Nurhaliza, Dato' Siti**

Dato' Siti Nurhaliza binti Tarudin is a Malaysian singer who has won numerous musical awards. She has also been honoured for her contributions to charitable venues, and was one of the recipients of the Icon of Malaysia Award. She has over 14 million followers on different social media outlets and released her 20th album in June 2023.

## **PAKISTAN**

### **Ismail, Al-Hajj Siddiq**

Al-Hajj Siddiq Ismail is a world-renowned *naat* and *hamd* reciter, philanthropist, and spiritual leader. He

has been reciting for the past 50 years in over ten languages. Ismail has performed in the presence of presidents, prime ministers, governors, chief ministers, and foreign dignitaries. He was presented with Pakistan's national award, the Sitara-i-Imtiaz, and the prestigious Pride of Performance Award, which he donated to the victims of Swat and Malakand.

### **Obaid-Chinoy, Sharmeen**

Obaid-Chinoy is an internationally acclaimed journalist, filmmaker and activist, initially known for her film work highlighting women's rights. She has gone on to win two Oscars, six Emmy awards for her films (three personally), and become the first artist to co-chair the World Economic Forum. The Government of Pakistan has honoured her with the Hilal-i-Imtiaz, the second highest civilian honour in the country, and Canada has awarded her a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. In 2020, Sharmeen co-directed the 'Ms. Marvel' series for Disney+, bringing a Muslim superhero to the big screen. In 2023 it was announced that she would direct one of three new *Star Wars* films, making her the first woman and person of colour to direct an episode.

### **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. She specializes in traditional *ghazals*, and often performs before stadium-sized audiences across South Asia and globally. In 2017, she was designated a Peace Ambassador by SAARC. In 2020, Parveen received the PISA Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2021 was awarded the highest civilian award, the Hilal-e-Imtiaz, by the President of Pakistan.

### **Qadri, Muhammad Owais Raza**

With millions of followers, Qadri is considered a legend in the field of *naat* recitation. 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. He has over 4 million followers on social media and his Youtube videos have over 90 million views.

### NETHERLANDS

#### El Mouhandiz, Rajae

Rajae El Mouhandiz is a Dutch/Moroccan/Algerian interdisciplinary artist, producer, curator, art consultant and policy advisor, with extensive experience in the arts/culture sector in the Netherlands and abroad. In 2005 she started her own label, Truth-seeker records, and in 2015 she transformed it into Kahina Productions. In 2019 she launched Ellae Foundation, to counter the gender, culture and socioeconomic gap in the arts/culture sector. She still produces interdisciplinary art, directs Ellae Foundation, and is Senior Advisor to the founder/MD of Caravane Earth Foundation, an international foundation which promotes social, cultural and ecological transformation.

### SWEDEN

#### Zain, Maher

Multi-platinum award-winning Swedish singer, songwriter and music producer of Lebanese origin, Maher Zain is a household name across global Muslim audiences. Maher's debut album 'Thank You Allah' reached the number one spot on Amazon's World Music charts. He is the most popular Muslim artist on social media with 37 million fans and the most viewed Muslim artist on YouTube with over 600 million views. Maher has performed in over 100 charity concerts across 35 countries and is a high-profile supporter of UNHCR.

### TÜRKIYE

#### Duzyatan, Engin Altan

Engin Altan Duzyatan is a Turkish actor who plays the starring role in the hit Turkish drama 'Dirilis Ertugrul' ('Resurrection Ertugrul') which is about the legendary father of Osman the First, the founder of the Ottoman Empire. The series centres around the migrations of the Kayi Tribe and their struggles against betrayal from within as well as battles against the Templars, the Mongols, Crusaders and the Byzantine Empire. It also gives a prominent role to the famous mystic Ibn Al-Arabi. The series has captivated audiences not just in Türkiye, but also huge numbers of Muslims globally. Engin is also well-known for his charitable works in Africa where he has set up access

to clean drinking water for over 100,000 people.

#### Pamuk, Orhan

Pamuk is one of Türkiye's most prominent writers and was the first ever Turkish Nobel laureate. His ten novels to date have been translated into over 60 languages and sold more than 13 million copies. His novels explore many aspects of Türkiye's rich culture past and present as well as philosophical questions. As an academic and intellectual, his voice is important nationally and internationally and he has voiced opinions on Kurds, Armenia and the current presidency. He teaches at Columbia University, USA.

#### 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 on 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 Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah to the Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### Ahmed, Riz

The multi-talented Riz Ahmed continues to advocate for a variety of issues ranging from fundraising for Syrian and Rohingya refugees to highlighting the lack of positive representation of Muslims in the media at the British House of Commons. Riz became a household name through his acting work in films such as *Star Wars: Rogue One*, *Nightcrawler* and 2018's *Venom* along with his Emmy-winning turn in HBO's *The Night Of*. His performance in *The Sound of Metal* was met with critical acclaim and earned him his first Academy Award nomination for best actor which he followed up with his feature writing debut, *Mogul Mowgli*, which touched on a number of the themes of his 2020 album, 'The Long Goodbye'. He received the Excellence Award Davide Campari at the 2023 Locarno Film Festival and his latest short film, *Dammi*, was premiered at the Swiss festival, which champions indie cinema.



---

### **Aslam, Syima (new)**

Syima Aslam MBE, along with Irna Qureshi, established the Bradford Literature Festival (BLF), in 2014. It has grown to become the largest literature festival in the North of England and a key event in the UK's cultural calendar. Spread over ten days, the festival has attracted the biggest names in literature and is rooted in ensuring diverse voices are represented as well as encouraging participation from all sectors of society. It has played a key role in getting Bradford recognized as the City of Culture 2025.

### **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 have probably made him the single most influential figure in the field of arts and culture in the Muslim world. 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. He made a gradual return to music over the past five years with his latest albums 'An Other Cup' and 'Roadsinger'. He was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2014. Islam received three distinctions in 2015: the Global Islamic Economy Award, the Steiger Award, and BBC's Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2019, Islam was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. His 2023 performance at Glastonbury confirmed his legend status.

### **Sanders, Peter**

Peter Sanders began his career photographing the music icons of the 1960s. He was amongst the first Europeans to photograph the Hajj in 1971 and has continued to travel internationally, creating exhibitions, presentations and undertaking photographic workshops. He has just finished his latest collaboration *Exemplars for Our Time*, building on his previous book *Meetings with Mountains: Encounters with the Saints and Sages of the Islamic World*. He is currently working on a book about Muslims in China. Sanders continues to act as a translator of Islam to those interested in acquiring a greater understanding and to encourage broader and deeper interactions between people of different races and faiths.

### **Yusuf, Sami**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

---

## *North America*

---

### **CANADA**

#### **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. His songs have influenced a whole generation of English-speaking Muslims by promoting the spirit and love of Islam.

### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

#### **Aden, Halima**

Halima Aden is a trailblazer in the world of fashion and beauty. She was the first ever contestant to wear a hijab and burkini in a USA pageant. She was the first hijab-wearing model to be signed by a major modelling agency and the first to appear on the front cover of *Allure*, *Vogue*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Essence* magazines wearing a hijab and burkini. Aden quit the industry in November 2020, citing that the profession was not compatible with her beliefs, but she seems to have returned a year later. All this is a far cry from her birth in a Kenyan refugee camp to Somali parents 24 years ago.

#### **Chappelle, David Khari Webber**

Dave Chappelle is an American stand-up comedian and actor best known for his satirical comedy sketch series *Chappelle's Show* (2003–2006). He has appeared in several films and TV series and has a \$20-million-per-release comedy-special deal with Netflix. Chappelle converted to Islam in 1991. Chappelle has received many awards and nominations for his work in stand-up and television including three consecutive Grammy Awards for Best Comedy Album. He has also received five Primetime Emmy Awards and one Screen Actors Guild Award. In 2019, Chappelle was awarded the prestigious Mark Twain Prize for American Humor.

#### **Henry, Aisha Gray**

Aisha Gray Henry is the Founder and Director of the charitable foundation and publishing company Fons Vitae, which is currently engaged in bringing out Imam Al-Ghazali's *Ihya Ulum al-Din* in English for parents and teachers as well as adapting it to accommodate children's workbooks and school curricula. It

will also publish an instructional DVD. ‘The Book of Knowledge’ and ‘The Principles of the Creed’ educational sets are available and in use internationally with ‘Purity and Prayer’ nearing completion. Translations into Urdu, Arabic and Malay are underway. Fons Vitae also has a children’s interactive website [www.GhazaliChildren.org](http://www.GhazaliChildren.org), and has established a pilot school project and prison programme. The Fons Vitae Ghazali Project has been launched to great acclaim in Morocco, Canada, Indonesia, England, and the USA.

### Wilson, Willow

Wilson is a writer and artist, notable for her works such as *Alif the Unseen*, which won the World Fantasy Award in 2013. She is also known for her comic series, *Ms. Marvel*, featuring a Muslim teenager who becomes a superhero. *Ms. Marvel* won the Hugo award for best Graphic Novel in 2015. Wilson has received multiple awards and nominations throughout her career and is currently contributing to Neil Gaiman’s Sandman comic book series.

### Youssef, Ramy

Ramy, a comedian, actor and writer, is best known for his eponymously titled show which explores an Egyptian-Muslim family navigating the various challenges of reconciling their religious and cultural identity within 21st-century America. Ramy Youssef created, co-wrote, executive produced and played the titular role of the show which won him the Golden Globe Award for best actor in a TV series (musical or comedy) ahead of Hollywood heavyweights like

Paul Rudd and Michael Douglas. A second series of *Ramy* debuted in 2019, and in its second season added multiple Oscar winner Mahershala Ali to the cast. He also directed an episode of ‘The Bear’, which is a multi award winning TV series.

### Zakariya, Mohamed

A machinist by training, American-born Mohamed Zakariya is a classically educated Islamic calligrapher who earned diplomas in three calligraphic scripts from the Research Center for Islamic History, Art, and Culture in Istanbul. His work has been collected and displayed worldwide, including most recently at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar. Zakariya designed Eid holiday stamps for the US Postal Service in 2009, 2011 and 2013. He has been featured in several movies, including the 2002 PBS documentary *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*.

---

## South America

---

### 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. She came under criticism for race baiting in Guyana’s 2015 election.

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ

Corruption has appeared on land and on sea because of what people’s hands have perpetrated...

*The Romans, 31*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

# QUR'AN RECITERS

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### EGYPT

#### **Sobhi, Islam**

Sobhi is an Egyptian medical student who started reciting Qur'an and uploading his videos on YouTube, now reaching more than 654 million views. His beautiful voice has attracted millions of followers, and the young reciter boasts more than 7 million followers on different social media outlets.

### IRAQ

#### **Al-Kurdi, Raad Muhammad**

##### **Abd al-Rahman Salih**

Raad Muhammad Al-Kurdi is from Kirkuk, Iraq. Raad began memorizing the Qur'an at a young age and won many recitation competitions as a child. He obtained a traditional license in recitation from Sheikh Ibrahim bin Fadel Al-Mashhadani. At the age of 15 he became the imam of Imam al-Shafi'i Mosque in Kirkuk. Since gathering a following of over 3 million subscribers on YouTube, he has become a visiting imam at Al-Kharafi mosques in Sulaibikhat, Kuwait and often leads prayers during Ramadan at the Ahmad Al-Habbai Mosque in Dubai, UAE.

### KUWAIT

#### **Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid**

Al-Afasy is Imam at Masjid Al-Kabir in Kuwait, and is also a singer of Arabic-language *nasbeeds*. He has gained international acclaim through his innovative use of technology to promote Islam through two satellite channels, a website, and videos on *YouTube*. He has more than 49 million followers on social media.

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **Al-Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmad 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-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad ibn Said**

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 studied the fundamentals of Islam and hadith transmission, and is recognized as an influential Saudi theologian. In 2009, he was appointed by royal decree as a co-imam for the *taraweeh* prayers in the Al-Haram Al-Madani in Madinah.

#### **Al-Mueaqly, Sheikh Maher bin Hamad**

Al-Mueaqly is an imam at the Grand Mosque in Makkah. He left his career as a mathematics teacher to become a scholar in Makkah and is now a popular preacher and teacher of Qur'anic studies. He has over 150 million views on his YouTube channel.

#### **Al-Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr**

Al-Shatri is a leading reciter of the Qur'an. Although he studied accounting, he became increasingly influential for his recitation of the Qur'an at international Islamic events, particularly across the Middle East and in Saudi Arabia. He is now based in London.

#### **Al-Shuraim, Sheikh Saud ibn**

##### **Ibrahim ibn Muhammad**

Al-Shuraim is a leading reciter of the Qur'an known for his unique recitation style across the world. He formally studied the fundamentals of Islam in Saudi Arabia before becoming a teacher, and subsequently became Imam of the Grand Mosque in Makkah for 32 years before retiring recently.

#### **Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul-Rahman**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

---

## *Asia*

---

### INDONESIA

#### **Hasballah, Muzammil**

Muzammil Hasballah is from the Paya Tijue Village in Indonesia. He holds a degree in architecture from Bandung Institute of Technology. He began studying recitation at the age of four and later enrolled in Madrasah Ulumul Quran. During his secondary educa-

tion, he won several recitation competitions. Because of his melodious recitation, he was given the position of imam at the mosque where he attended university. He began uploading videos of himself leading prayers in the mosque and has gained millions of followers on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.

### 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 at Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an in Jakarta. She also lectures at the Islamic University of Indonesia.



Recite: In the Name of your Lord Who created

*The Clot 96 : 1*

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an © FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

## Free Islamic Calligraphy

[www.FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com](http://www.FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com)



FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com is an established website that is doing much to make high quality Islamic calligraphy available more widely.

Having noticed that the Divine Names, key Qur'anic verses and sacred formulas were not available free online in the most perfect and beautiful styles of Arabic calligraphy, the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought commissioned prize-winning calligrapher Mothana Al-Obaydi and other calligraphers to draw them and digitise them onto JPG, vector files and 'Word document' files so that they can be adapted, coloured and printed out by anyone according to their taste from the website. Thus, instead of paying for decorating their home with drawings or Western posters, or instead of paying for expensive name-brand calligraphy, any Muslim in the world can adapt the most beautiful pieces.

FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com is a non-profit website owned by the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought, an Islamic charity (waqf) set up by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal in 1433 AH / 2012 CE. of calligraphy and decorate his or her home with it for the price of a piece of a paper. This, God willing, will not only make people's homes more beautiful, but also their lives more beautiful as they see and remember God's Name more often.

The calligraphy pieces featured in this publication are used courtesy of [www.FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com](http://www.FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com).



---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### ALGERIA

#### **Benganna, Khadija**

Benganna is an award-winning journalist who began her journey on an Algerian TV and radio station. She went on to become part of the founding team at Al-Jazeera, where she remains as Senior News anchor and journalist. Benganna has covered major historical and political events, interviewed heads of state and key personalities in government. In addition to being a renowned journalist, Benganna has worked with the United Nations' High Commission for Refugees and boasts over 14 million followers on different social media outlets.

### EGYPT

#### **Howeidy, Dr Fahmy**

Dr 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 ground-breaking 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.

#### **Mansour, Ahmed**

Ahmed Mansour is a journalist and TV presenter for Al Jazeera. He is best known for his coverage of wars, most prominently in Iraq and Afghanistan from where he published more than 1000 reports. He is also the presenter of a widely watched TV programme 'Bela Hodod' (Without Borders) and 'Shahed Ala Al-Asr' (A Witness to History). He was arrested in Berlin by German police at the request of the Egyptian Government, but was later released. Mansour has published 25 books.

### JORDAN

#### **Al-Fares, Ola**

Al-Fares is a Jordanian lawyer, TV presenter and journalist currently working for *Al Jazeera*. She has over 13 million followers on various social media outlets and has won several awards including: Young Arab Media Professionals Award (2009), Best Jordanian Media Award (2009), Creative Youth Shield (2010), Jordanian Model for Successful Youth (2011) and Arab Woman Of The Year (2015). She is considered to be one of the most influential media figures in the Arab world.

### KUWAIT

#### **Al-Mutawa, Dr Naif**

Dr Naif Al-Mutawa is the creator of the popular Islamic-themed comic and animation series 'The 99' which aired on global television in several languages and won several global accolades including the 2014 Islamic Economy Award for Media. He has been twice honoured by WEF who named him a Social Entrepreneur of the Year in 2009 and a Young Global Leader for 2011.

Dr Naif is also Professor of clinical psychology at Kuwait University's Faculty of Medicine and the Founder of Kuwait's first neuropsychology centre. A practising clinician, he is licensed and operates in New York, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and the UAE. Dr Naif's work as an entrepreneur in both the media and health verticals led to his launch of Tenweem, the first Islam-themed, Arabic language hypnotherapy app which has since been rolled into an expanded Mental Health Tech offering under the name Tuhoon.

#### **Suwaidan, Sheikh Dr Tareq**

Dr Tareq Suwaidan is the CEO and owner of Gulf Innovation Group in Kuwait, and was the General Manager of Al-Resalah Satellite TV. An entrepreneur and TV personality, his shows rank among the highest in the Middle East. Suwaidan is also prominent as a motivational speaker and author of books on Islam. Suwaidan has over 20 million social media followers and uses the *seerah* as a source for leadership and strategic skills.

## PALESTINE

### **Khanfar, Wadah**

Khanfar was at the helm of Al Jazeera for eight years as Managing Director and Director General. During that time, the network transformed from a single channel into a media network. During this period, the Arab world witnessed historic transformation, including the Arab Spring. Khanfar, who resigned from the network in September 2011, has been named as one of Foreign Policy's Top 100 Global Thinkers of 2011 as well as one of Fast Company's Most Creative People in Business of the Year. Khanfar has a diverse academic background with postgraduate studies in philosophy, African studies, and international politics. He is currently the President of Al Sharq Forum.

### **El-Kurd, Mohammed, El-Kurd Muna**

During the most recent crisis in Palestine, the evictions at Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, Mohammed El-Kurd was one of the few activists to post daily on social media and keep the world updated. His message resonated globally and contributed to widespread rallies opposing the relentless continued displacement of the Palestinian people and the Judaization of Jerusalem. It marked a shift in the media discourse, which managed to connect the current aggression as a continuation of the plight of the Palestinians over the past 70 years. In 2021, Mohammed and Muna El-Kurd were named in the *Time* magazine's annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world and have subsequently received other international honours.

### **Omer, Mohammed**

An award-winning journalist, Mohammed Omer has been credited with reporting on the crisis in Gaza for major media outlets including the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, Al Jazeera, the *New Statesman*, Pacifica Radio, Electronic Intifada, and *The Nation*. He was raised in the Rafah refugee camp and, despite calamities faced by his family—his father was imprisoned, his teenage brother was killed, and his mother was injured in a demolition—he dedicated himself to journalism and reporting on the crisis. He is the recipient of the 2008 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism. He is the author of *Shell Shocked: On the Ground Under Israel's Gaza Assault*, a book that received testimonials from a wide range of well-known authors, including Noam Chomsky.

## 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, as well as her self-titled 'Nashwa' talk show on Dubai TV. Forbes listed her among The Top 100 Most Powerful Arab Businesswomen 2020 while the *Hollywood Reporter* selected her as one of the 25 Most Powerful Women in Global TV.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **Al-Ibrahim, Waleed bin Ibrahim**

Waleed Al-Ibrahim is the Chairman of Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC). He founded MBC in London in 1991 as the first independent Arabic satellite TV station. In 2003, he launched Al Arabiya, a 24-hour news channel. MBC now includes 11 channels catering to all viewers in Arabic, English, and Persian. In November 2017, he was detained, along with several Saudi princes and billionaires, on an anti-corruption drive. He spent three months at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh before being released in January 2018. The Government of Saudi Arabia arranged to acquire 60% of MBC, leaving the remaining 40% of the company in Al-Ibrahim's hands.

### **Omran, Lojain**

Omran is one of the most famous Arab television presenters across the MENA region. She started in shows such as 'Ya Hala' and 'The Situation with Lojain'. Most recently, she hosts the popular show 'Good Morning, Arabs!' which is based in Bahrain. She has also worked as a UNHCR Ambassador to refugee camps across the Middle East. She has over 12 million social media followers.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### **Al-Awadhi, Najla**

HE Najla Al-Awadhi is a former Member of Parliament (the Federal National Council) of the United Arab Emirates and a distinguished media pioneer in the Middle East. She is one of the first women in the history of the UAE to become an MP, and also holds the distinction of being the youngest parliamentarian in the UAE. During her four-year term in

parliament, she served on the Education, Youth, Media and Culture Committee. Najla Al-Awadhi is also the first Arab woman to hold a chief executive post in a state-run media organization. With a particular focus on television, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of Television Channels at Dubai Media Incorporated.

#### **Al-Kaabi, Noura**

Noura bint Mohammed Al-Kaabi was appointed Minister of State in 2023, previously having served as Minister of Culture and Youth and Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development for the United Arab Emirates. She was also the Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs from February 2016 to October 2017. Educated in the UAE and London, she has a broad range of experience including being a board member of the UAE National Media Council.

---

## *Asia*

---

### **AFGHANISTAN**

#### **Mohseni, Saad**

Mohseni is a successful businessman, as well as the founder and head of the Moby Group, Afghanistan's largest media company. The Moby Group has interests in television, radio, print, production, online news services, directories, IT&T, and retail.

### **CHINA**

#### **Hoja, Gulchehra**

Gulchehra Hoja was a prominent figure in various Chinese media, including producing and hosting the first TV programme in Uyghur for children. With the Chinese crackdown on anything Uyghur, her image was banned on Chinese media and she was forced to flee the country. She has continued to speak out for the rights of the Uyghurs despite huge personal loss; 25 members of her family are currently held in 're-education' camps which aim to remove all traces of Uyghur identity and replace it with the majority Han culture. This policy extends to those Uyghurs who are also not in camps by having Han Chinese officials forcibly live in Uyghur houses and report on 'un-Chinese' behaviour. In 2020, Hoja received the Courage in Journalism Award by the International Women's Media Foundation.

### **INDONESIA**

#### **Mohamad, Goenawan**

Goenawan Mohamad is a writer, editor, activist and award-winning journalist. He is the Founder and Editor of *Tempo* magazine, Indonesia's most widely circulated weekly. His criticisms of the regime resulted in the magazine being forcibly closed twice by President Suharto's New Order administration. He has 1.39 million followers on Twitter.

### **PAKISTAN**

#### **Hamid, Zaid**

One of the most influential television and social media personalities in Pakistan, Zaid Hamid is a security consultant and strategic defence analyst by profession. He is also a popular political commentator, former host of a highly popular TV series on geo-politics and Islamic history, and is the founder of Brass Tacks, a Pakistani think tank on global politics. He maintains a huge audience within Pakistani society, with millions of followers on social media, especially among the youth and Armed Forces. In 2015, he was arrested by Saudi authorities while on Umrah because of his opposition to the proposed Pakistani participation in the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen. He was released shortly afterwards after intervention by the Pakistani army.

#### **Iqbal, Salman**

Salman Iqbal owns ARY Digital Network, the largest media network in Pakistan. The network's reach covers Pakistan, the Middle East, Europe, North America, and many other regions of the world. He is recognized as an independent media voice in Pakistan and one of the most powerful and influential media personalities in the Muslim World.

#### **Shakil-ur-Rahman, Mir**

Shakil-ur-Rahman is the owner of the Independent Media Corporation, Pakistan's largest media conglomerate. The Geo TV network and Jang Group are both under this umbrella organization. Shakil-ur-Rahman is also President of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society and the Chief Executive and Editor-in-Chief of the Jang Group, which publishes a number of newspapers and magazines in Urdu and English. Shakil-ur-Rahman was arrested on 12 March 2020 on the allegation of land fraud and was granted bail after eight months.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### Hasan, Mehdi

Mehdi Hasan is a leading Muslim political commentator whose analysis and comments on contemporary issues find resonance with many Muslims, especially the younger generation. He has worked as Political Editor for *Huffpost UK* and is a columnist and senior contributor at *The Intercept*. He has hosted Al Jazeera English's Head to Head and other weekly interview and discussion programmes. He now hosts his own show, 'The Mehdi Hasan Show', on NBC's streaming channel, the Peacock, which continues to promote an understanding of events in a wider context and to feature Hasan's characteristic insightful reporting and probing interviews that hold people in power to account. He has recently released *Win Every Argument: The Art of Debating, Persuading, and Public Speaking. Win Every Argument*.

#### Husain, Mishal

Husain has worked as a producer and presenter for the BBC for more than 20 years. As well as being a newsreader for BBC TV and BBC Radio, Husain has hosted high-profile shows which have seen her interview figures such as Boris Johnson, San Suu Kyi, and Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. She has won a variety of awards including the Broadcaster of the Year Award at the London Press Club Awards in 2015. She is a judge for the Amnesty International Media Awards and is an ambassador for the charity Mosaic which supports young people from deprived communities. She has recently written a book entitled *The Skills: From First Job to Dream Job—What Every Woman Needs to Know*, which has been described as "the ultimate handbook for women".

---

## North America

---

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### Mohyeldin, Ayman

Ayman Mohyeldin currently hosts Ayman on MSNBC and Peacock on MSNBC. He has interviewed world leaders, politicians, and diplomats, including President Erdoğan after the failed coup attempt in Türkiye. He reported on DA'ISH in Iraq, Syria, Eu-

rope, and Türkiye. He participated in the network's coverage of the 2016 US Presidential Elections. Mohyeldin was previously an international correspondent. He covered the Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine, the revolutions of the Arab Spring, and the attacks on the US Consulate in Benghazi, where he was one of the first journalists to report the situation. His coverage of the 2014 Israeli War was widely cited and praised. Prior to joining NBC News, Mohyeldin was a correspondent for Al Jazeera English. From 2008-2010, he was the only foreign broadcast journalist based in the Gaza Strip, and during the 2008-2009 War on Gaza, he was the only American journalist reporting live from Gaza.

#### Oz, Dr Mehmet

Dr Oz first came to prominence in 2004 with appearances as a health expert on The Oprah Winfrey Show before spinning off and hosting his own hugely popular television show. The show focused primarily on medical issues and healthy living and he often drew upon his Turkish heritage when giving advice. It aired its final episode in January 2022. Since then, Dr Oz, a cardiothoracic surgeon and a Columbia University Professor, has moved into politics, becoming the Republican nominee for the 2022 United States Senate election in Pennsylvania. He has co-authored, with Michael F Roizen, six New York Times best sellers, and has a regular column in *Esquire* magazine amongst others. He has almost 12 million followers on different social media outlets.

#### Zakaria, Fareed

Fareed Zakaria is one of the United States' foremost public intellectuals. He hosts CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS and is a *Washington Post* columnist. Prior to this, he was Editor-at-Large for *Time* magazine and Editor of *Newsweek International* and *Foreign Affairs*. His book, *The Post-American World: Release 2.0*, is an expanded version of his international best-seller. In 2013 he became one of the producers for the HBO series 'Vice', serving as a consultant.



# CELEBRITIES & SPORTS

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### EGYPT

#### **Aboutrika, Mohamed**

Aboutrika is regarded as one of the best African football players of all time, having lifted 28 major titles, including three Africa Cup of Nations titles over his 16-year career. He has also been named UNDP Goodwill Ambassador and is widely followed, having almost 17 million fans on different social media outlets. He has criticized African fans for excessively following European football clubs and for European football not acknowledging African leagues and merely using the talent of their players.

### PALESTINE

#### **Assaf, Mohammed**

Mohammed Assaf won first place in the popular TV program 'Arab Idol 2013' after his final performance of *Ali al-Keffiyeh* (Raise Your Keffiyeh), a nationalistic Palestinian song and de facto anthem which has now garnered over 90 million views. Raised in Khan Yunus refugee camp in the Gaza strip, he has become the face and voice of Palestinian youth and the voice of its peoples suffering. Assaf became UNRWA's Goodwill Ambassador, was named Ambassador of Culture and Arts by the Palestinian National Authority, and was given a position with diplomatic standing by the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. He has over 22 million fans on social media. His song 'Dammi Falestini' was controversially removed from Spotify following pressure from a Zionist advocacy group.

### TUNISIA

#### **Jabeur, Ons**

Jabeur was born and raised in Tunisia, and started her trailblazing tennis career by winning the junior Grand Slam title in 2011, the first for a North African woman. 2022 proved to be somewhat of a breakthrough year in that she reached the final of both Wimbledon and the US Open, but lost both. She reached the 2023 Wimbledon FInal but despite being the favourite this time, she lost again. She currently has four WTA titles.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

### SENEGAL

#### **Mane, Sadio**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

---

## *Asia*

---

### MALAYSIA

#### **Yusof, Vivy**

Vivy Yusof is an entrepreneur, a fashion icon and a social media influencer with millions of followers. She co-founded the international e-commerce fashion company FashionValet and the dUCk group, which focuses on hijabs. She has won multiple prestigious awards, including in the fields of entrepreneurship and social media. Her popular show 'Love Vivy' which follows her life as a mother and businesswoman, is in its third season.

---

## *Europe*

---

### DENMARK

#### **Nadim, Nadia**

Nadim fled Afghanistan and settled in Denmark where she started playing professional football in 2005. Since then she has represented major clubs in the USA, UK and French leagues, winning league titles. She has also played for the Danish national team since 2009, reaching 100 caps in 2022, quickly becoming one of their most important players. In parallel to her sports career, she has continued her medical studies and graduated as a surgeon from Aarhus University in January 2022. She also speaks 11 languages and was awarded the title, UNESCO Champion for Girls and Women's Education, in 2019. Nadia is also the only female football player that is an Ambassador for the FIFA Men's World Cup 2022 in Doha.

## FRANCE

### **Benzema, Karim**

Karim Benzema is a French footballer of Algerian origin who plays as a striker for Real Madrid. Benzema started senior football in 2005 in Lyon with his hometown club Olympique Lyonnais. In 2009, he moved to Real Madrid and has been a prolific striker ever since. He has scored over 400 career goals scoring over 320 goals for Real Madrid, second only to Cristiano Ronaldo. Benzema has also been awarded French Player of the Year four times by France Football. He recently joined the growing list of high profile players to move to the Saudi Pro League. He plays for Al-Ittihad.

### **Zidane, Zinedine**

Zinedine Zidane is a French footballing legend of Algerian descent. Born in a poor neighbourhood of Marseilles, he went on to become one of the greatest footballers ever, winning all major prizes on the personal, club, and country levels and winning player of the year three times. In 2018, Zidane, managing Real Madrid, became the first manager in the history of football to win three consecutive UEFA Champions League titles. A few days after the victory, he resigned as Real Madrid coach. After Real Madrid's poor performance the following season, Zidane returned and won the La Liga for the second time in his managerial career before leaving again.

## ITALY

### **Lame, Khaby**

Khaby Lame is a Senegalese-born Italian who is currently the most followed Tik Toker in the world with over 162 million followers. His TikTok videos are mainly silent and mock overly complicated life hack videos. Although living in Italy since he was one, he was only granted nationality in 2022 (aged 22). He studied in a Qur'an memorization school in Senegal for a year when he was 14 years old.

## RUSSIA

### **Nurmagomedov, Khabib**

Please read bio in Honourable Mentions section

## SWEDEN

### **Chimaev, Khamzat (new)**

Khamzat Chimaev is a Swedish mixed martial arts

and freestyle wrestler. He is currently number four in the UFC welterweight rankings and is a three-time Swedish National champion. Chimaev was born in Russia, and moved to Sweden at the age of 18, marking the beginning of a national and international award-winning career. Khamzat trains the Head of the Chechen Republic's two teenage sons, Zelimkhan (Ali) and Adam. He has over two million followers on different social media outlets.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### **Farah, Mohamed**

The most successful British athlete ever, Farah won the gold in the 5000m and 10,000m at the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games as well as six other global golds. Born in Somalia but raised in the UK from the age of 7, Farah has captured the hearts of the British public with his hard work, success, smile and warm personality. He is a popular role model to follow for people from all over the world, especially in the Muslim world. He was awarded a CBE in 2013 and knighted in 2017. He announced his retirement from running in 2023. His winning celebration, the 'mobot', is mimicked internationally.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### **Hussain, Nadiya**

Since winning the BBC's 'The Great British Bake Off' in 2015, Nadiya Hussain has gone from being the most famous British baker to being a columnist, author and television presenter. She has produced a popular documentary giving insight into Bangladesh, her country of origin, as well as a TV cooking series. She has become a household name and an instantly recognizable face in the UK, Bangladesh and for Muslims worldwide. She was bestowed with the honour of being asked to produce a cake for the 90th birthday celebrations of the late HM Queen Elizabeth II.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### **Tate, Andrew (new)**

Andrew Tate, often referred to as the most googled man on the planet, is a kick-boxing champion who moved on to offering online webcam services and courses giving advice on wealth accumulation (Hustlers University, now the War Room and The Real World). His followers feel empowered by his demands of self-discipline, independence and mak-

ing a living outside of a regular 9-5 job. His critics call him misogynistic and a dangerous role model for young men encouraging them to objectify and abuse women. He is currently banned on most social media platforms, but his content flourishes and the reinstatement on X (formerly Twitter) made him even more popular than before. In October 2022 he announced his conversion to Islam. In December 2022, he was arrested, alongside his brother, in Romania on charges of rape, human trafficking and a host of other charges. They were held for several months before being moved to house arrest; although this has now been relaxed, the case is on-going.

---

## *Oceania*

---

### NEW ZEALAND

#### **Williams, Sonny**

Sonny Williams is an international rugby player and former heavyweight boxing champion from New Zealand. Williams converted to Islam in 2008, and is the first Muslim to play for the legendary All Blacks. In 2013, he was judged the World's Best Rugby League Player at the annual RLIF Awards. He memorably gave away his World Cup winner's gold medal to a young supporter just after the 2015 final.

---

## *North America*

---

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### **Kareem, Abdul-Jabbar**

Abdul-Jabbar played basketball for 20 seasons for the Milwaukee Bucks and the LA Lakers before being honoured as one of the 50 Greatest Players in NBA History. In 2012, he was selected by the Secretary of State to be a US Global Cultural Ambassador and in 2016 he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest US civilian honour. Abdul-Jabbar is also a best-selling author of 17 books and is an eight-time Columnist of the Year for his essays in *The Hollywood Reporter*. He has acted in numerous television series and movies including *Airplane*, *Game of Death* and most recently FX's number one rated comedy, *DAVE*. He has also taken on activism in his later years, speaking out against Islamophobia and other forms of social injustice. In 2021, the NBA created

the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Social Justice Champion Award. He publishes weekly at [Kareem.substack.com](http://Kareem.substack.com)

#### **Tyson, Mike (Malik Abdul Aziz)**

Tyson won his first title in 1986 at 20 years old making him the youngest heavyweight champion in history. His dominance in the ring faded as his wild personal life grew out of control leading him to serve three years in prison where he converted to Islam. After his release, he went on to regain his WBC and WBA titles, becoming one of the few men to do so. He retired in 2006 and was inducted in both the International Boxing Hall of Fame and the World Boxing Hall of Fame. After his retirement, Tyson went on to publish books and act in television and movies. In 2012, he launched a foundation for troubled youth. Though he has had episodes of controversial behaviour after retirement, his sincerity in trying to uphold the values of his religion and improve himself morally and spiritually inspire millions.

# TOP EXTREMISTS

---

## *Middle East and North Africa*

---

### JORDAN

#### **Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad**



Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi (born Isam Muhammad Tahir Al-Barqawi) is a Jordanian-Palestinian Salafi leader who became a mentor for Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, the founder of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, while they were in prison together. Al-Maqdisi's writings are still a source of inspiration for many Salafi-Jihadis despite his criticism of the extreme violence of Al-Zarqawi and other jihadis. He is especially known for his book in which he declared *takfir* on the Saudi regime. Al-Maqdisi was recently found guilty on terrorism charges and sentenced to five years in prison by a Jordanian court.

### SYRIA

#### **Al-Julani, Abu Muhammad**



Al-Julani is the current Emir and founder of the Syrian militant group now known as Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS). This group was formed in 2017 with the merging of several other militant groups. It is the main force fighting the Syrian regime and until recently was allied to Al-Qaeda. It formally renounced links with Al-Qaeda in July 2016 in an attempt to show that the group is focused on regime change in Syria alone, and does not have wider regional goals.

---

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

---

### SOMALIA

#### **Umar, Ahmad**



Ahmad Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah, has been the Emir of Al-Shabaab since 2014, after US airstrikes killed the previous Emir (Ahmed Abdi Godane). When Umar became advisor to Godane in 2013, he purged Al-Shabaab of its foreign fighters, and oversaw all the domestic policies of the group. Umar adheres to *takfiri* ideology and strives to fulfil Godane's vision for Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab still carries out terrorist attacks in Mogadishu, Somalia, despite the presence of thousands of Somali government and African Union troops. They have targeted hotels and resorts as well as Ugandan and Kenyan troops.



إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أُنذِرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ

تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ  
وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشْوَةً وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ  
مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾  
يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ

لَا تَفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ  
آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنْتُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنْتُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ وَإِذَا لَقُوا  
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنُوا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَى شُيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا  
مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزَؤُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدِّهُمْ  
فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ

بِالْهُدَىٰ فَارْحَبْ تَحَرُّهُمْ وَبَارِكَا كَانُوا مُهْتَكِرِينَ

As for the disbelievers, alike it is for them whether you have warned them or have not warned them, they do not believe. ﴿١٠٠﴾ God has set a seal on their hearts, and on their hearing; and on their eyes is a covering; and for them there will be a mighty chastisement. ﴿١٠١﴾ And some people there are who say, 'We believe in God and the Last Day'; but they are not believers. ﴿١٠٢﴾ They would deceive God and the believers; and only themselves they deceive; and they are not aware. ﴿١٠٣﴾ In their hearts is a sickness; and God has increased their sickness; and there awaits them a painful chastisement because they used to lie. ﴿١٠٤﴾ When it is said to them, 'Do not corruption in the land', they say, 'We are only putting things right'. ﴿١٠٥﴾ Truly, they are the agents of corruption, but they perceive not. ﴿١٠٦﴾ When it is said to them, 'Believe as the people believe,' they say, 'Shall we believe as fools believe?' Truly, they are the foolish ones, but they know not. ﴿١٠٧﴾ When they meet those who believe, they say, 'We believe'; but when they go apart to their devils they say, 'We are with you; we were only mocking'. ﴿١٠٨﴾ God [Himself] mocks them, leaving them in their insolence, bewildered. ﴿١٠٩﴾ Those are they who have bought error for guidance; so their commerce has not profited them; nor are they guided. ﴿١١٠﴾

# NEW ADDITIONS TO THE 450 LISTS

## SCHOLARLY

- Professor Khairudin Aljunied, Singapore  
page 118

## POLITICAL

- Mohammed Shayya' Al-Sudani, Iraq  
page 123
- President Chief Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Nigeria  
page 126
- General Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan  
page 128
- Humza Yousaf, United Kingdom  
page 130

## ADMINISTRATION OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

- Grand Mufti Mevljud Dudić, Serbia  
page 137
- Shaykh Faisal Hamid Abdur-Razak, Canada  
page 137

## PREACHERS & SPIRITUAL GUIDES

- Khalifa U Thein Win Aung, Myanmar  
page 142
- Hamza Tzortzis, United Kingdom  
page 143

## SOCIAL ISSUES

- Ghanim Al-Muftah, Qatar  
page 150
- Dr Edna Adan Ismail, Somalia  
page 153
- Khurram Parvez, India  
page 155
- Dr Mustafa Izzuddin, Singapore  
page 156
- Asim Hafiz, United Kingdom  
page 157
- Paul Williams, United Kingdom  
page 157

## BUSINESS

- Mohsin and Zuber Issa, United Kingdom  
page 164

## ARTS & CULTURE

- Hamza Namira, Egypt  
page 170
- Syima Aslam, United Kingdom  
page 177

## CELEBRITIES & SPORTS

- Khamzat Chimaev, Sweden  
page 186
- Andrew Tate, United Kingdom  
page 186



# THE OBITUARIES

رَبِّ قَدْ أَيَّدْتَنِي بِالْمَلَأِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي تَأْوِيلَ الْأَحَادِيثِ  
فَإِطْرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَانِ وَقَدْ دَفَعْتَ إِلَيْنَا الْإِسْلَامَ وَالْأَخْرَافَ تَوْفِيقِي مُسْلِمِينَ وَالْحَقُّ يَا أَصْلَحَ الْخَلْقِ

My Lord, indeed You have given me of sovereignty and You have taught me the interpretation of events. Originator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Protector in this world and the Hereafter. Take me to You in submission and join me to the righteous

*Joseph 12 : 101*

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an © FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

## Qubaysi, Sheikha Munira

Scholarly

Country: Syria

Born: 1933

Died: 26 December 2022

Sheikha Munira Qubaysi was 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 became very popular, and still is, making the Qubeysiat, in numbers, the leading Islamic movement in Syria.

Munira Qubeysi was born to a merchant from the Hauran region in Syria in 1933 and grew up in Al-Muhajirin district in Damascus. She attended government schools as a child, eventually entering the Faculty of Science at the University of Damascus. After graduation, she worked as a teacher. At that time, she attended the lessons of Sheikh Ahmed Kuftaro, who later became the Grand Mufti of Syria. However, after some differences, she continued her studies under Sheikh Abdul Karim Al-Rifai. She entered the Faculty of Islamic Sciences at the University of Damascus, studying under Sheikh Mustafa Al-Siba'i, who was leader of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, and Professor Issam Al-Attar, who succeeded Al-Siba'i. Although she studied under several teachers, she carved her own path while maintaining good relations with the various Muslim intellectual communities in Damascus. After the Baathist coup in Syria, Sheikha Qubeysi focused all her efforts on women's religious education—even to the point of refusing to marry—establishing what is now generally known as the "Qubeysiat".

At a time when meetings of Islamic organizations were proscribed in Syria, Sheikha Qubeysi's network, the Qubeysiat, was legally permitted to host classes and meetings in mosques, although they had been

operating as a secret society long before that time. Members of the Qubeysiat are providing a unique role within Arab society as scholars and teachers exclusively catering to the needs of Muslim women, providing a forum to address religious questions and discuss religious issues. Due to some of her followers coming from wealthy and influential families, the Qubeysi movement has been able to spread globally as well as affect changes in Syria. Under Bashar Al-Assad, restrictions around wearing hijab were relaxed. During the Syrian Civil War the Qubeysiat grew extensively and enjoyed good relations with the regime. Among their new responsibilities conferred by President Assad is near-exclusive control over the country's youth Qur'anic memorization programme conducted in every mosque.

## Nadvi, Rabey Hasani

Scholarly

Country: India

Born: 1 October 1929

Died: 13 April 2023

Nadvi was an Islamic scholar and a bilingual author of around 30 books in both Arabic and Urdu.

His influence emanated from being the 4th President of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Rector of Darul-Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, and a founding member of Rabita Aalam-e-Islami, Makkah Mukarramah. He was also the president of multiple Islamic centres and academies.





Najafi, Grand Ayatollah  
Muhammad Hussain

Scholarly

Country: Pakistan

Born: 10 April 1932

Died: 21 August 2023

Grand Ayatollah Muhammad

Hussain Najafi was 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 *marjiyya* and was one of only two ayatollahs from Pakistan.



Ajibola, Prince Bola

Administration of Religious Affairs

Country: Nigeria

Born: 22 March 1934

Died: 9 April 2023

HE Prince Bola Ajibola was the former head of the Nigerian High Commission in London and the President and Founder of the Islamic Mission for Africa. He also served as a judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague between 1991 and 1994. In 1994, Prince Bola Ajibola was appointed a member to the Permanent Court of 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 of Nigeria, as well as being the former President of the Nigerian Bar Association. He was the founder, proprietor, and president of the Board of Trustee of Crescent University in Abeokuta.



Al-Baghdadi, Abbas Shakir

Arts & Culture

Country: Jordan

Born: 1951

Died: 2 May 2023

Abbas Al-Baghdadi was one of the world's foremost experts in Islamic calligraphy. Born in 1951 in Baghdad, he had a distinguished career as a calligrapher and teacher of calligraphy. He adhered strictly to the rules of classical calligraphy and was averse to modern calligraphy, especially when its practitioners had not mastered the art in its traditional form. He was well-known for the balance, clarity, and majesty of his works.



O'Connor, Sinéad

Arts & Culture

Country: Ireland

Born: 8 December 1966

Died: 26 July 2023

Sinéad O'Connor was an international pop star who achieved platinum and Grammy success from the late 1980s. Her signature shaved head and powerful voice made her instantaneously recognizable. Outside singing, her views and actions also attracted much attention. She held strong political, social and religious views and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in 1999 with a church not affiliated to the Roman Catholic Church (an institution she heavily criticized for its inaction against child abuse within its ranks). In October 2018, age 51, she converted to Islam and took the name Shahada Sadaqat. Almost a year later, she returned to the stage after a five-year hiatus and performed her most famous hit 'Nothing Compares 2 U'—dressed in a red abaya and matching hijab—to rave reviews.



Friedlander, Shems

Arts & Culture

Country: United States of America

Born: 8 January 1940

Died: 22 November 2022

Shems Friedlander—writer, artist, filmmaker, photographer and educator—was a committed follower of the acclaimed 13th-century poet and Islamic scholar, Jalal Al-Din Muhammad Rumi. Friedlander published several books on Rumi including his last book, *Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi's Forgotten Message*, containing interactive digital content via QR codes. Among his other books were *Winter Harvest*, *Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes* and *When You Hear Hoofbeats Think of a Zebra*. Friedlander was Emeritus Professor at the American University in Cairo where he taught graphic design and painting for 20 years. He won over 30 awards for graphic design. Friedlander also wrote two monodramas and his documentary films have been shown at film festivals in the US and abroad.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَاسْمِعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا

لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَفِي نَفْسِكُمْ شَحْخٌ نَفْسِكُمْ فَاولئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

التَّحَاثُّ ١٦: ٦٤

صَلَّى اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمِ

So fear God as far as you can, and listen, and obey and expend; that is better for your souls.  
And whoever is shielded from the avarice of his own soul, such are the successful.

*Mutual Disillusion, 16*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

# GUEST CONTRIBUTIONS

- 
- 197     **Islamic Philosophy, Prophetic Intelligence, and the AI Agenda**  
Osman Bakar, PhD, FASc
- 202     **Unveiling Systemic Bias: The Targeting of Muslim Charities by the Canada Revenue Agency**  
Faisal Kutty
- 204     **Muslims in Serbia**  
Mufti Dr Mevlud Dudic
- 207     *“We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam”*  
Shaykh Faïd Mohammed Saïd



# Islamic Philosophy, Prophetic Intelligence, and the AI Agenda

Osman Bakar, PhD, FASc

## INTRODUCTION

In my article titled ‘The Clash of Artificial and Natural Intelligences: Will It Impoverish Wisdom?’, which appeared in the 2023 issue of *The Muslim 5001*, I made the following concluding statement: “... it is imperative to pursue an AI agenda that would not be in destructive conflict with NI. Not only that, contemporary man needs to be reminded of the intelligence that defines his humanness and the role of the prophetic intelligence as the model to be emulated.” The present article is pursuing this same theme of clash of the two intelligences that we now come to realize as unprecedented in the history of human civilization, both in terms of its nature and its scope. But this time the discussion is further explaining the meanings of the two imperatives mentioned in the quote and their implications for contemporary human civilization.

Let me now rephrase the first imperative in the form of a fully loaded question: how can we pursue an AI agenda that to all intents and purposes would serve humanity by delivering societal and civilizational goods and countering social ills in innovative ways that would at least minimize destructive consequences on the present humanity and its civilization, if not altogether eliminate them? And let me also rephrase the second imperative in the form of a no less loaded question: how can we persuade and impress upon present humanity to listen to and appreciate the precious message embodied in the traditional idea of prophetic intelligence and draw the necessary conclusions from it? This article attempts to put forward several important ideas that may help us formulate some key answers to these two questions.

For Muslims, the two stated imperatives, which in our opinion are civilizational in scale, are integral to the Qur’an’s social philosophy. In Qur’anic terms, “delivering societal and civilizational goods” would be acts of honouring the social principle of *amr bi’l-ma’ruf* while “countering social ills” is to honour the principle of *nahy ‘an al-munkar*.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the idea of technology as a tool of human progress as

opposed to the idea of man as a servant of technology or the idea of technology as an end in itself—a simple but precious message from traditional civilizations that has fast disappeared from the screen of modern consciousness—is a very important integral element of the Qur’an’s social philosophy. The issue of ethics of technology, a novel example of which is what we have just raised in relation to the possible, and indeed already visible misuses of AI, may easily be seen in Islam as part of a much broader epistemological concern: namely, the ethics of knowledge. Islamic ethics of knowledge is best summed up in this well-known prophetic instruction: “Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave,” and: “Seek knowledge even as far as China.” But only “seek knowledge that is beneficial” and at the same time “seek God’s protection from knowledge that is unbeneficial.”

Beneficial knowledge is traditionally understood in Islam as any knowledge that would contribute to the affirmation of two fundamental revealed truths. These truths are: first, the principle of Divine Unity (*al-tawhid*); and second, the principle of Divine Law (*al-shariah*)<sup>3</sup>, understood as the foundation of a just and balanced socio-political, or better still civilizational order. The latter principle may also be understood as the principle of Divine Justice since the essence of the Divine shariah is justice for both the human and natural orders. The domain of such knowledge is indeed vast, and in fact unlimited, since both unity and justice are in the natures of things. And the opposite of beneficial knowledge, that is, the unbeneficial or useless kind, is any idea or knowledge claim that negates or undermines these twin truths or that is indifferent to their epistemological demands. From the perspective of the two truths, such kind of knowledge is far *limited* in scope, and yet some humans prefer to indulge in it.

It is in the light of this understanding of the concept of useful and useless knowledge that contemporary Muslim discourse on the AI agenda should be conducted. And it is with such an awareness that we need to ask ourselves this very fundamental question: is the AI Agenda going to enhance our appreciation

1 *The Muslim 500*, 2023, pp. 218-222.

2 See Qur’an, Aal Imran, 3:104. The phrase *amr bi’l-ma’ruf* literally means “enjoining what is known to be good” while the phrase *nahy ‘an al-munkar* has the literal meaning of “prohibiting what is evil”.

3 Islam sees the affirmation of these twin truths as the *raison d’être* of every prophetic mission in human spiritual history. See Qur’an, Al-Ma’idah, 5:48.

of cosmic unity of which human unity is an integral part and, more importantly, our appreciation of the divine unity of which this cosmic unity is a reflection?<sup>4</sup> Or will it destroy the unity of the human order as a result of the havoc it wreaks on the human microcosm through uncontrolled technological innovations, and hence destroy the idea of cosmic unity itself? Consequently, with the unity of the human and cosmic orders shattered, does the AI Agenda not render incomprehensible or meaningless the pursuit of knowledge of divine unity? From the Islamic perspective, all these questions pertaining to the benefits and harm, and merits and demerits of AI, are issues with profound implications. We would only ignore them at the peril of the ummah.

### THE CONCEPT OF PROPHETIC INTELLIGENCE

The most fundamental of the big ideas we have in mind in this discussion is the idea of prophetic intelligence, the very concept of intelligence that is needed to remind us that it is the prototype of our humanity and our own ideal in life. By prophetic intelligence Muslim philosophers who were deeply immersed in its study understand it to mean human intelligence in its most perfect form, which they took efforts to explain. In other words, it is the most developed form of intelligence that can possibly be attained by the human mind. The Muslim philosopher Al-Farabi (870 CE–950 CE) identifies this super intelligence with the class of persons traditionally known as prophets. In Islam, the technical term for prophet is *nabiy*, which is known to have a precise and generally accepted meaning unlike the word “prophet” in the English language, which is known to have a rather loose meaning in its general usage.

The essential meaning of “prophet” as understood in the Qur’an refers to someone who is a recipient of divine revelation (*wahy*) through the intermediary role of the Archangel Gabriel. It seems clear that the Prophet Muhammad (salutation and peace be upon him) understood the word “prophet” in this precise sense when he mentioned that God sent 124,000 prophets to mankind beginning with Adam (peace be upon him) and ending with himself. Numerically, this special group of people constitutes a minute fraction of mankind and yet in influence and impact they are the real shapers of human history. They were able to accomplish their earthly feats thanks largely

to their super intelligence. It is thus not without good reason that some Muslim philosophers chose to devote their intellectual efforts to the study of prophetic intelligence.

The definition of prophet (*nabiy*) as recipient of divine revelation raises the issue of the interrelationship between the well-known triad: namely, Allah, Gabriel, and the Prophet Muhammad. At the popular level the interrelationship between the three entities is only understood in general terms or accepted as a matter of faith. But at a more intellectual level the issue of the interrelationship in question requires an understanding of why the three entities are to be viewed as the most fundamental triad underlying the Islamic belief system. The requirement for such an understanding becomes obvious when we realize that the first four out of six Islamic articles of faith are incorporated into the meanings of the triad. Islamic philosophy pursues the understanding by delving deeper into the meaning of revelation and prophethood beyond the popular understanding of the doctrines. One of the main aspects of this deeper meaning pertains to the nature and characteristics of prophetic intelligence that we argue will help define the limits of AI and thereby restore epistemological order into its contemporary discussion—something that is increasingly viewed by philosophers of ideas as in a state of utter conceptual confusion.

In our view, this confusion has largely arisen from an uncritical acceptance of ideas and concepts pertaining to intelligence, and more specifically of the human type that are floating around in abundance these days. One noteworthy source of such confusion is *transhumanism*, the contemporary American socio-philosophical movement advocating human transformations through intelligence engineering, which I have discussed in my previous article cited earlier. This uncritical acceptance of ideas surrounding AI speaks much about the state of ignorance of many people in the contemporary world about man’s past knowledge of his own natural NI as accumulated and preserved in various philosophical traditions of the world. It is mainly in response to the state of confusion surrounding the issue of the comparative worth of NI and AI that the idea of prophetic intelligence is sought to be discussed in this article. We further argue that the idea of prophetic intelligence ought to serve as our definitive source of an all-embracing theory of human and artificial intelligences in which the real potential and the veritable role of

<sup>4</sup> In one verse the Qur’an speaks of cosmic unity as proof of divine unity, meaning that the former unity reflects the latter. See Qur’an, Al-Anbiyyah, 21:22.

each is clearly discerned and spelt out. In this way the legitimate role of AI may be defined and promoted without doing injustice to NI, which logic itself tells us is a necessary condition for the sound development of AI.

It is to the Islamic philosophical tradition that we turn for inspiration and help in articulating a solid and coherent theory of prophetic intelligence. The main reason for our choice is simple. It may be cogently argued that Islamic philosophy provides the best rational approach to an exposition of prophetic intelligence for the very purpose of this article. The rational approach in question is viewed as universal and scientific, the meaning of which is now explained. To begin with, it is pertinent to emphasize that such an approach is none other than that of the Qur'an itself. To underline its universal approach, the Qur'an refers to the long line of prophets in human spiritual history, who were sent to all branches of the human family<sup>5</sup> to spread the same message of divine unity.<sup>6</sup> These scriptural data pertaining to the divine appointment of prophets from all communities or nations allow us to speak of the Qur'an as championing the universal idea of prophetic institution that is grounded on the common message of divine unity and justice of the divine law. Rather central to this spiritual institution is the universal teaching of prophetic intelligence in which light we may hope to better understand the limits of both human natural intelligence and AI. Islamic philosophy takes the same revealed data as source of their inspiration to formulate a universal theory of prophetic intelligence. The first such theory to be presented in detail was formulated by Al-Farabi.<sup>7</sup>

Islamic philosophy's exposition of prophetic intelligence is not only universal but also scientific. Since the word scientific is understood and used in several senses, a clarification of its usage is called for. In current popular usage the word is understood in the limited sense of empirical study of the world of nature that is based on physical observation and experimentation. Thus, the validity or legitimacy of the term is dictated by the field and method of study. In academia, however, a wider meaning is granted to the term to include the social sciences, and to a small extent the humanities. But while in this case the field for scientific investigation has been widened, the same

empirical method of study is in use. Worth comparing, it is in the Islamic intellectual tradition that the notion of scientific enjoys its broadest usage that cuts across diverse objects and methods of study. Here in this tradition, it is possible to speak with unambiguity and coherence of a science of divine reality and a science of angels in the same way that it is possible to speak of the sciences of minerals, plants, animals, and human beings. In the same breath, along with empirical methods, Islamic epistemology speaks of the non-empirical ones, including mathematical, linguistic, metaphysical, and symbolical methods and scriptural exegesis. Islamic philosophy views all these different methods as scientific (*ilmīyyah*) in nature.

In pursuing a scientific approach to the study of prophetic intelligence, Islamic philosophy seeks to faithfully emulate the Qur'an's scientific spirit as expressed in the concept of *burhan*, which carries the meaning of clear and convincing proof. The noun *burhan* occurs eight times in the Qur'an where it is used to denote convincing proofs that either come from God<sup>8</sup> or are to be furnished by deniers of the truth in support of their counterclaims.<sup>9</sup> Al-Farabi (870 CE – 950 CE), Ibn Sina (980 CE – 1037 CE), Ibn Rushd (1126 CE – 1198 CE), Qutb Al-Din Al-Shirazi (1236 CE – 1311 CE) and other members of the Peripatetic school of Islamic philosophy adopted the term *al-burhan* to denote their idea of scientific method, which they argued is the best of all logical methods when it comes to the task of delivering to the human mind knowledge that is characterized as certain (*ilm al-yaqīn*). They understood *burhan* to mean a demonstrative proof. According to Al-Farabi, demonstrative proof is the most certain kind of proof since assent to its premises is of the degree of certainty, the highest possible. The certain and excellent nature of *burhan* is derived from the certain nature of its premises.<sup>10</sup> Al-Farabi views revealed data and sense-data as reliable premises for demonstrative proofs. Thus, significantly, Islamic philosophy accepts an integrated and unified theological and empirical approach to the study of prophetic intelligence, which confers it with some kind of independent authority to critically examine and judge the epistemological claims of AI.

Another related term in the Qur'an is *bi'l-haqq*, which conveys its scientific spirit when addressing

5 Qur'an, Al-Ra'd, 13:7.

6 Qur'an, Ibrahim, 21:25.

7 For Al-Farabi's theory see Osman Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1998), Chapter 2.

8 Qur'an, for example, Al-Nisaa', 4:174.

9 Qur'an, for example, Al-Baqarah, 2:111.

10 Osman Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam*, p. 85.



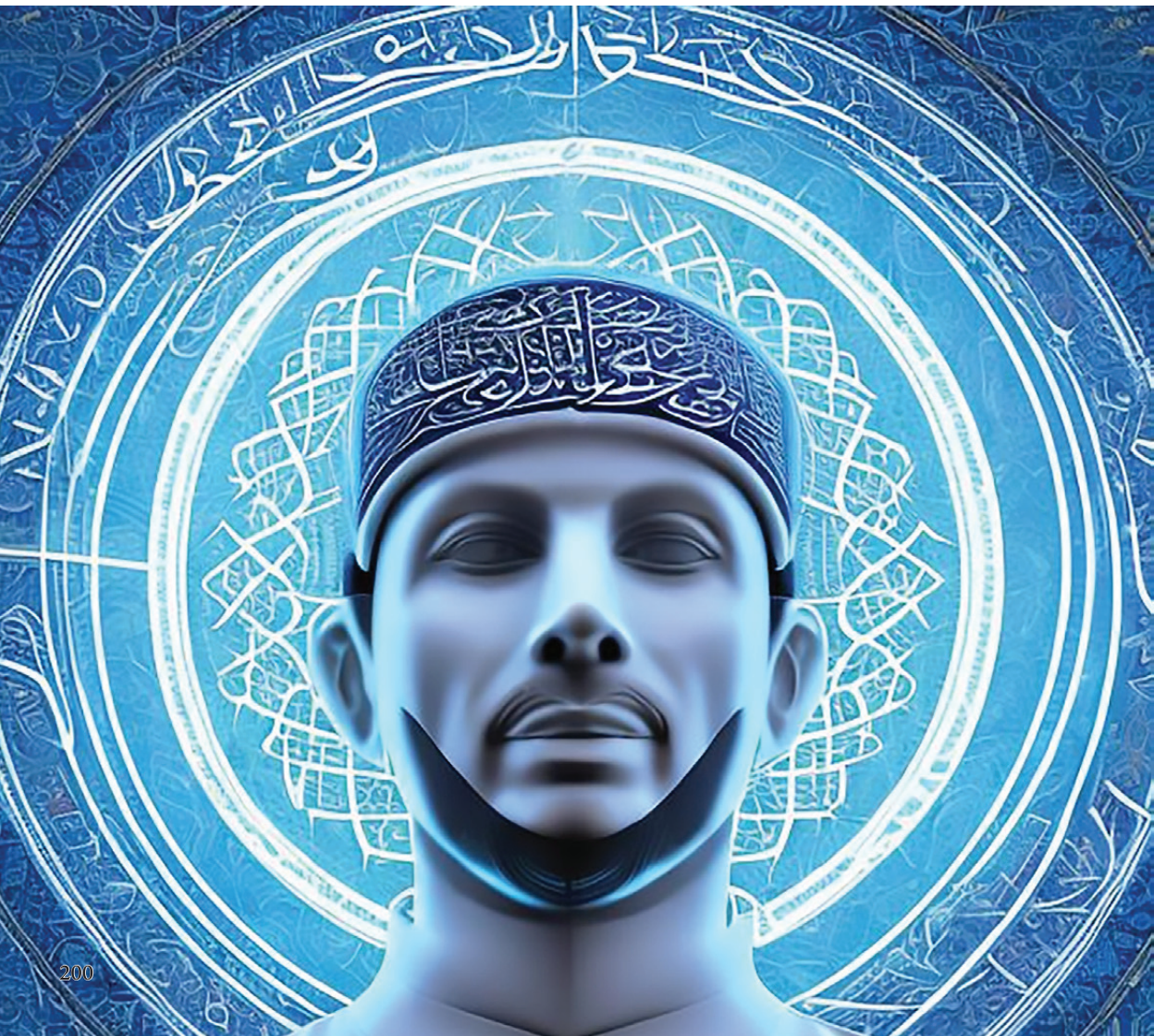
ontological and cosmological issues relating to the different orders of reality. The term *bi'l-haqq* means in truth or with the truth. This term occurs many times in the Qur'an. Its basic meaning is "in conformity with the truth", which is traditionally understood as referring to knowledge at various levels. At its highest metaphysical level, the truth refers to the knowledge of Divine Unity, while the lowest level of truth is identified with knowledge of biophysical reality, the essence of which is knowledge of the four principles of causality. Muslim philosopher-scientists hold in high esteem this knowledge of the principles of causality—the material, formal, efficient, and final causes—which they view as scientific. The concept of final cause is especially significant for our present discussion on science since it affirms the relevance of the idea of purpose to the study of nature. In fact, one of the meanings of *bi'l-haqq* is the idea of purpose of

everything that exists in the cosmos. As applied to the study of intelligence, its purposive dimension needs to be given due treatment as exemplified by Islamic philosophy.

### ENGAGING AI WITH THE HELP OF PROPHETIC INTELLIGENCE

According to a prophetic hadith, the first thing created by God was intelligence (*aql*). This is the universal intelligence (*al-aql al-kulliy*) that is metaphysical and luminous in nature and that is yet to be reflected in the mirror of cosmic existence at various levels of its hierarchic reality and in multiple forms. The complete Islamic cosmos as shaped by the Qur'an and the prophetic hadiths stretches downwards from this heavenly universal intelligence to the lowest earthly intelligence through the angelic intelligences. It dis-

*AI generated art using this article's title as a prompt*





plays an orderly, beautiful, and majestic hierarchy of intelligences in which the place and role of human intelligence is rather unique. There is thus the cosmic ocean of intelligence in which our human intelligence is placed and functions and of which we should always be conscious when talking about its powers and potentials. Human intelligence alone possesses characteristics that are partly heavenly and partly earthly. Its powers appear limitless, but man's uncontrolled earthly desires and ambitions have also made real the corruption of his intelligence.

As the first and the most perfect creature that preceded and originated all other intelligent creatures, the universal intelligence may be viewed as the immediate principle of the cosmos. Since based on the Qur'an and hadiths the Prophet is regarded as not just the best human but also as the best creature (*khayr al-khalq*) and hence more specifically as the most perfect and the most excellent of all creaturely intelligences, human and non-human. Some philosophers and Sufis have identified the intellect of the Prophet with this universal intelligence. Accordingly, this universal intelligence became known within the Islamic universe as the Muhammadan Intellect. The implication of this Muslim philosophical teaching for the contemporary AI discourse is obvious. From the perspective of the Muhammadan prophetic intelligence, which defines the limits of creaturely intelligence, all attempts to create an intelligence that would be superior to the human intelligence as such will be doomed to failure from the start. This is because the best of human creation will still fall within the creaturely realm. As such, it could not surpass the perfection of the Muhammadan prophetic intelligence.

Dreamers of an AI utopia may be deeply disappointed to hear such a conclusion and may choose to ignore it. But the idea of prophetic intelligence is there in the Islamic tradition to remind ourselves of the numerous possibilities of intellectual development and advancement and mind transformations that are open to our natural intelligence. We do not deny the possibility of man creating intelligent machines that could outperform man in doing certain types of works. That possibility should be explored in

the name of technology at the service of man. But we argue that the issue of such a possibility is altogether of a different kind from the issue of intelligence transformation as conceived by the transhumanists that, in our view, threatens the traditional idea of humanness and thus the very existence of the human species itself.

More generally, the AI agenda of exploring "the machine in man" with all its technological possibilities may be viewed as still falling within the ethically permissible realm. However, in undertaking this exploration there is something that can be learned from Islamic philosophy, particularly Al-Farabi's comprehensive theory of intelligence. The theory, we argue, does justice to both natural intelligence and AI. It explains the various stages of intelligence transformation from childhood to adulthood culminating in the attainment of what Al-Farabi calls the acquired intellect (*al-aql al-mustafad*),<sup>11</sup> which is the most developed form of the human intellect. In principle, this possibility is open to every human being, which makes the quest for it democratic. This superior intellect has the power to think about itself and its knowledge content without having any more to depend on new empirical and rational data. But this intellect admits of degrees of perfection. Al-Farabi defines prophetic intellect as the acquired intellect in its most perfect form, which has the distinction of being in frequent contact with Gabriel. That distinction is a matter of divine choice, not human. As the Qur'an says, "But Allah will choose for His special mercy whom He wills."<sup>12</sup>

Al-Farabi's theory is relevant to the exploration of the machine in man through his discussion of man's five imaginative powers that are associated with his five internal senses. These are the powers of formal representation (*al-musawwirah*), estimation (*al-wahm*), memory (*al-hafidhah*), animal compositive imagination (*al-mutakhayyilah*), and human compositive imagination (*al-mufakkirah*). In my view, if at all AI can emulate and even surpass the powers of human intelligence, it would in this domain of the internal senses but would remain limited to their machine-like dimension.

---

Dr Osman Bakar is currently Al-Ghazali Chair of Islamic Thought at ISTAC-International Islamic University Malaysia and Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Science at University of Malaya.

---

11 The literal meaning of this word is "acquired intelligence or intellect". The acquired intellect is so-called because it is attained through human efforts based on healthy development of the naturally endowed human intelligence and not through artificial interventions.

12 *The Qur'an*, Al-Baqarah, 2:105.

# Unveiling Systemic Bias: The Targeting of Muslim Charities by the Canada Revenue Agency

**Faisal Kutty**

In recent years, Canada has grappled with a pressing issue that strikes at the core of its democratic principles: systemic bias within the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) audits of Canadian Muslim charities. This alarming problem has raised concerns about fairness, religious freedom, and the overall integrity of the country's charitable sector.

The revelation of systemic discrimination within the CRA's auditing practices of Canadian Muslim charities has brought the issue of systemic bias to the forefront of Canadian discourse. This biased approach is not an isolated incident but is part of a larger problem deeply rooted in the bureaucratic structure of the agency.

The core issue begins with the CRA's Review and Analysis Division (RAD), which is tasked with investigating allegations of terrorism financing within the charitable sector. Over time, it has become evident that RAD disproportionately targets Muslim charities. This troubling revelation has come to light through various investigations and reports, including those by the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group, the University of Toronto's Institute of Islamic Studies, and the National Security Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA).

## RELiance ON BIASED SOURCES

A significant contributor to systemic bias within the CRA's auditing practices is its reliance on biased sources and individuals. These sources often have a clear anti-Muslim bias and have no real expertise in Islamic matters, yet their opinions play a pivotal role in shaping CRA's decisions.

According to documents filed in court, the CRA leans on so-called "terrorism experts" like Matthew Levitt, Matthew Epstein, Evan Kohlmann, and Lorenzo Vidino. These individuals have been linked to Islamophobic organizations, think tanks, or media outlets and have demonstrated a lack of objectivity. The reliance on such individuals as experts within the CRA's decision-making process raises concerns about the agency's impartiality and its commitment to fairly assessing risk.

## RIGHT-WING EXTREMIST INSTITUTIONS AND MEDIA

The CRA's reliance on right-wing extremist institutions and media outlets further underscores the agency's problematic approach. Institutions like the Hudson Institute, the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, and the Middle East Forum have been funded by organizations with anti-Muslim agendas, perpetuating stereotypes and misinformation. Using such sources to shape policy and decision-making reveals a glaring bias that is detrimental to the Muslim community.

## THE CRA'S APPROACH TO INTELLIGENCE

Another concerning aspect of the CRA's auditing practices is its approach to intelligence. The agency appears to have shifted away from relying on established sources of credible information, instead opting for flawed, politically motivated, or outdated intelligence. This shift has resulted in discriminatory



decisions against Muslim charities without proper accountability or external review.

### **BURDEN OF PROOF ON MUSLIM CHARITIES**

As a consequence of this systemic bias, Muslim charities find themselves under an unfair burden of proof. They are tasked with disproving allegations based on flawed, biased, or unverified information. This creates an untenable situation where organizations are presumed guilty until proven innocent, a clear violation of the principles of justice and fairness.

### **CALLS FOR REFORM**

Efforts to address this issue have been initiated through investigations by NSIRA and recommendations by the taxpayer ombudsperson. However, there is a growing chorus of voices demanding substantial and transparent reform within the CRA's audit practices concerning Muslim charities. The prime minister and relevant ministers hold the responsibility to ensure that the discriminatory audits cease.

### **IMPACT ON CANADIAN MUSLIM CHARITIES AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

The impact of systemic bias in CRA audits extends beyond the administrative level; it affects the heart and soul of the Canadian Muslim community. For years, Muslim charities have been the target of discriminatory audits, creating a climate of fear and mistrust. Donors have been reluctant to support these charities due to concerns of being associated with potential wrongdoing. This climate has stifled the charitable sector's vital work in supporting marginalized communities and addressing societal issues.

### **LEGAL CHALLENGES AND THE SEARCH FOR JUSTICE**

Some Muslim charities, such as the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), have taken legal action against the CRA, arguing that audits are tainted by bias and anti-Muslim discrimination. These legal challenges are essential in seeking justice and holding the CRA accountable for its actions.

### **A LARGER IMPACT ON SOCIETY**

The systemic bias within CRA audits is not an isolated issue; it has broader implications for Canadian society. By targeting Muslim charities unfairly, the government risks alienating a significant portion of the population and exacerbating divisions. It also undermines the values of inclusivity, multiculturalism, and religious freedom that Canada claims to uphold.

### **CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**

Many voices within the charity sector have called for the suspension of RAD audits of Muslim organizations until the NSIRA inquiry is complete. However, the government's approach has been to maintain business as usual. It is incumbent upon the prime minister and key ministers to demonstrate their commitment to dismantling systemic bias within the CRA.

The systemic bias in CRA audits of Canadian Muslim charities is a pressing issue that demands immediate attention and reform. It has far-reaching implications, affecting the rights of religious freedom, justice, and fairness in Canada. As the nation grapples with this problem, it is crucial for the government to demonstrate its dedication to inclusivity, multiculturalism, and the principles of justice and fairness. Only through substantial and transparent reform can Canada hope to eliminate systemic bias and uphold its democratic values.

---

A leading North American Muslim lawyer, Faisal Kutty is outspoken on issues of human rights, Islamic thought and anti-terror legislation. He is principal lawyer at Kutty & Associates, a respected Toronto law firm with an international client base.

# Muslims in Serbia

**Mufti Dr Mevlud Dudic**

## ITS HISTORY

The Muslim population in Serbia has a deep-rooted historical presence dating back centuries. While the exact origins of Muslims in this European country are complex, their history can be traced to various ethnic groups, including Bosniaks, Albanians, Turks, Roma, and converts from the Serbian population. Geographically dispersed across Serbia, they have varying degrees of influence in different regions. Two regions, Sandžak and the Preševo Valley, have substantial Muslim populations.

The historical journey of Muslims in Serbia is closely tied to the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans, and the Ottoman era marked the beginning of significant Islamization in the region. As the Ottoman Empire gradually weakened, conditions for the Muslim population fluctuated, and, in some cases, areas once predominantly Muslim were ethnically cleansed, erasing their historical presence<sup>1</sup>.

The final withdrawal of the Ottomans from the Balkans led to significant border changes and the division of the Bosniak population into distinct entities. Bosnia and Herzegovina remained a separate administrative and territorial entity, while Novi Pazar Sandžak was divided between the newly formed Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro<sup>2</sup>.

## CULTURE

A rich and sophisticated Muslim culture and civilization developed during the Ottoman Empire's five-century presence in the Balkans<sup>3</sup>. Even in areas where ethnic cleansing occurred, remnants of Ottoman architecture persist, albeit sporadically. The influence of the Ottoman period extends to the Serbian language, which has incorporated over 10,000 words from Turkish, Persian and Arabic, shaping its lexical core.

The Sandžak region, in particular, preserves Ottoman culture and heritage. Novi Pazar boasts 25 mosques from the Ottoman era, and various monuments of material culture, such as the Main Sjenica Mosque and Musala in Prijepolje, have been preserved. Many prominent Ottoman dignitaries were buried in old cemeteries and mosque courtyards.

The traditional lifestyle, family structure and so-

cial life of Muslims in Serbia are rooted in patriarchal and oriental sources. Over five centuries, thousands of scholars, thinkers, and writers from the region made significant contributions to Islamic culture and civilization in Turkish, Persian and Arabic<sup>4</sup>.

Despite preserving this cultural heritage, the Bosniak population faced challenges to their national identity, language and literature under Yugoslav regimes. Attempts were made to erase their identity from official history and destroy monuments.

## LANGUAGE AND SCRIPT

Muslims in Serbia represent a diverse linguistic and cultural landscape. Their language and script choices vary based on ethnicity.

Bosniaks: a significant part of the Muslim population who primarily speak Bosnian. They utilize both Latin and Cyrillic alphabets, with preference for the Latin script<sup>5</sup>.

Albanians: another prominent group that has its own distinct language and script, which belongs to a separate language family, and has little overlap with Serbian.

The Roma population: includes Muslims, communicates using Romani mixed dialects, Serbian and Bosnian, depending on the majority population in their particular communities.

Muslim converts: from the Serbian population, generally speak Serbian and use the Cyrillic alphabet as their primary script.

## POLITICAL ASPECTS

The political landscape in Serbia underwent significant changes with the introduction of multiparty politics in 1990 and the subsequent disintegration of Yugoslavia<sup>6</sup>. Wars erupted in different parts of the Balkans, including Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Preševo Valley, Serbia (NATO bombing in 1999), and Macedonia (Albanian-Macedonian conflict in 2001). During these conflicts, Muslims in Serbia faced various forms of reprisals, including expulsions, kidnappings, repression and torture.

The Yugoslav regime, particularly during the communist one-party system, systematically discriminated against and sought to assimilate Muslims. This included the closure and demolition of mosques, arrests, torture and discrimination in areas such as ed-



ucation and employment. One notable international agreement that contributed to these challenges was the “Gentleman’s Agreement” between the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and the Republic of Turkey in 1954.

In response to these hardships, Muslims tried asserting their rights and cultural identity. Various declarations and political actions were taken, often in the face of government opposition.

## MEDIA

Media representation has played a significant role in shaping perceptions of Muslims in Serbia. Unfortunately, it has often been characterized by aggressive and sensational reporting, particularly concerning regions like Sandžak. Media outlets have sometimes portrayed Muslims as disruptive or destabilizing forces in society. During periods of conflict, media coverage has exacerbated tensions.

Access to media for Muslims in Sandžak is somewhat limited. They rely on media outlets established by the Islamic community and a handful of independent sources<sup>7</sup>. However, certain media outlets tend to align with the ruling majority and present a subjective view of reality.

## EDUCATION

Historically, the education system in Serbia was influenced by Islamic institutions, thanks to the institution of *waqf*, which supported the establishment of various educational institutions. These included *sibyan-maktab*s, madrasahs, *rushdies*, and *dar al-idadija*. In contrast, the Orthodox Christian population had fewer educational institutions, primarily within churches and monasteries<sup>8</sup>.

After the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed in 1918, Muslims faced challenges, in-

cluding the absence of a unified Islamic community at the state level until 1929. The official leadership of Muslims was vested in the *reis-ul-ulema* (head of the Islamic community), but the Ministry of Religions controlled appointments and aimed to reduce the influence of the Islamic community while seizing *waqf* property.

Yugoslavia underwent significant political and ideological changes in the post-World War II era. The communist government abolished religious teachings and shariah courts, leading to the closure of most madrasahs, mosques and Islamic community properties.

The Islamic community in Serbia recognized the need to address educational deficiencies. In 2001, it established the Islamic Academy of Education, which was later transformed into the Faculty for Islamic Studies. Additionally, the International University of Novi Pazar was founded in 2002 to enhance educational opportunities for Muslims. Despite these initiatives, there were efforts by the government to establish branches of other Serbian universities in Novi Pazar, creating competition.

The Islamic community has developed a comprehensive educational network to supplement the existing education system, including kindergartens, preparatory *maktab* schools, madrasahs, and the Faculty for Islamic Studies.

## ISLAMIC COMMUNITY

Upon the Ottoman Empire’s departure and diplomatic negotiations, the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina gained independence from the Ottoman Empire. Muslims in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia) faced a challenging period due to the lack of an Islamic community at the state level until 1929. The Ministry of Religions controlled the appointment and supervision



of officials, often aiming to diminish the influence of the Islamic community.

After World War II, Muslims in Yugoslavia found themselves in a new political framework. The communist government abolished religious teachings and shariah courts, closing madrasahs and seizing *waqf* properties. It wasn't until 1969 that a constitution successfully defined the Islamic community in Yugoslavia, establishing Republic Councils and a Supreme Council based in Sarajevo. However, this structure disintegrated with the breakup of Yugoslavia.

After the change of the Serbian regime in 2012, and especially after the entry of the late academic Mufti Muamer Zukorlić, and other deputies of the BDZS/SPP into the National Assembly of the Re-

public of Serbia and the promotion of the partnership policy, a completely different environment was created in which the rights of Muslims in the Republic of Serbia began on an upward trajectory and positive shifts became very noticeable.

## IN SUMMARY

Today, the Islamic community in Serbia is recognized by the entire state system, which slowly restores the faith of believers in state institutions and normalizes relations that have been disturbed for decades. Of course, many more concrete steps must be taken to resolve all issues and correct injustices, and all factors must work diligently.

## REFERENCES

- Aličković, Sulejman: *Bogumili Sandžaka*, Libro, Tutin 2009.
- Arhiv Islamske zajednice u Srbiji.
- Bušatlić, Ismet: *Islamska kultura i civilizacija na Balkanu (Hrestomatija)*, Fakultet islamskih nauka u Sarajevu, Sarajevo, 2006.
- Dudić, Mevlud: *Sandžački Azhar*, Monografija, Gazi Isa-beg medrese u Novom Pazaru, El-Kelimeh, Novi Pazar 2010. (u štampi).
- Duraković, Enes; Duraković, Esad; Nametak, Fehim: *Bošnjačka književnost u književnoj kritici, Knjiga I, Starija književnost*, Alef, Sarajevo 1998.
- Dupljak, Rifat: *Mladi muslimani u Sandžaku*, Historijski arhiv "Ras", Novi Pazar 2003.
- Imamović, Mustafa: *Historija Bošnjaka*, BZK "Preporod", Sarajevo, 2006.
- Hadžijahić, Muhamed: *Povijest Bosne u IX i X stoljeću*, BZK "Preporod" Sarajevo 2004.
- Halilović, Alija: *Lična karta Sandžaka*, SENT br. 7-8, Novi Pazar, novembar 2003.
- Nakičević, Omer: *Historijski razvoj institucije Rijaset*, Rijaset Islamske zajednice, Sarajevo 1996.
- Omerdić, Muharem: *Prilozi izučavanju genocida nad Bošnjacima*, (1992-1995), El-Kalem, Sarajevo, 1999.
- Republički zavod za statistiku, *Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova 2002. godine*.
- Pfeifer, Cristian; Šećeragić, Bisera: *Precepcija privatnog biznisa sektora Sandžaka u političkom i ekonomskom ambijentu*, Evropski pokret u Srbiji, Lokalno vijeće u Novom Pazaru, Novi Pazar 2009.
- Krizna grupa za Evropu : *Srpsik Sandžak: I dalje zaboravljen*, Izvještaj br. 162, 8. april 2005.
- Sandžački odbor za zaštitu ljudskih prava i sloboda

*Svjedočenja iz Sandžaka*, Edicija „Plava biblioteka“, Knjiga 17, Novi Pazar 2002.

- *Ustav Republike Srbije*
- Zbornik radova: *Genocid U Bosni i Hercegovini 1991-1995*, Institut za proučavanje zločina protiv čovječnosti i međunarodnog prava, Sarajevo 1997.
- <http://www.rijaset.ba>
- <http://www.islamskazajednica.org>
- <http://sandzakpress.net>
- <http://www.b92.net>
- <http://www.vesti.rs>
- <http://www.rts.rs>
- <http://www.pressonline.rs>
- <http://bnv.rs>
- <http://www.lsvsu.org.rs>

## ENDNOTES

- 1 For example, in 1868, 34 mosques were demolished in Užice and 24 in Smedrevo. There were between 270 and 300 mosques in Belgrade alone, and only the Bajrakli Mosque on Dorcel has survived. A similar fate befell Šabac, Niš, Vranje and all other cities that are part of the Principality of Serbia. Imamović, Mustafa: *Historija Bošnjaka*, BZK "Preporod", Sarajevo, 2006., str. 328-331.
- 2 Imamović, Mustafa: *Historija Bošnjaka*, BZK "Preporod", Sarajevo, 2006., str. 349-350.
- 3 Ismet Bušatlić, *Islamska kultura i civilizacija na Balkanu (Hrestomatija)*, Fakultet islamskih nauka u Sarajevu, Sarajevo, 2006.
- 4 Details: Duraković, Enes; Duraković, Esad; Nametak, Fehim: *Bosniak Literature in Literary Criticism, Volume I, the older literature*, Alef, Sarajevo 1998.
- 5 Jahić, Dževad; Halilović, Senahid; palić, Ismail: *Gramatika bosanskoga jezika*, Dom štampe, Zenica

2000.

6 Halilović, Alija: The identity card of Sandžak, SENT no. 7-8, Novi Pazar, November 2003, pp.37

7 Glas Islama, Radio Refref, TV Universa.

8 Dudić, Mevlud: *Sandžački Azhar*, “Gazi Isa-beg” monograph, Madrassa in Novi Pazar, El-Kelimeh, Novi Pazar 2010. (in print).

Mufti Dr Mevlud Dudić was born in 1966 in Tutin, Serbia and graduated from the Alauddin Madrasah in Priština (Kosovo) and Islamic Faculty in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina). He earned a Master's degree and Doctorate at the International University in Novi Pazar (Serbia). He served as director of Gazi Isa-bey Madrasah (1994-2006), as dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies (2006-2008), as well as rector of the International University in Novi Pazar (2008-2014). He is the President of the Meshihat of the Islamic Community in Serbia (since 2014).

## *“We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam”*

**Shaykh Faïd Mohammed Saïd**

Questions of humanity and humanism, what even constitutes a human being, have exercised both ancient and modern thinkers—and such questions acquire urgency in moments of stress and tension. The conventional worldview among religious traditions, albeit with divergences between and sometimes within them, holds that God brought into being a creation invested with angelic qualities and able to attain a higher, godly nature; and yet is simultaneously prone to lapses which, when taken to extremes, gives way to a demonic nature. As conceived in the Islamic tradition, the human being is both spiritual and material, invested with the capacity to freely choose between its own higher and lower natures. Infused with the attributes of the Creator, the human being, when faithful to God-like qualities, can rise higher than even the angels, for God endowed the human species with an elevated dignity far above the rest of His Creation.

Religious traditions and secular humanism would find comfortable accommodation in Islam, for the Qur'an provides a direct expression of the primacy of the human:

*“Now, indeed, We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and borne them over land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life, and favoured them far above most of Our Creation.”* (Al-Israa', 17:70)

This elevation of the human (viewed from a God-centric humanism) is in fact central to Islam. If the Qur'an is communicable to all humanity, it is because “the human” occupies a central role in a divinely ordered universe. Far from being left to swim in a cosmos without meaning, the human being is

installed on Earth with responsibilities concomitant to that of the caretaker. The status of this being, the human, in God's Creation is made explicit in the verse cited, as are the responsibilities of this creature in both its spread across the habitable environments of this living planet which we call Earth, and in its management of the planet's resources. Especially significant is the fact that the elevation of the *children of Adam* is without discrimination. The Qur'an insists on stressing this point. Humankind—the children of Adam—is one family; if the evolution of Adam's progeny entailed diversity of ethnicity and multiplicity of beliefs—and this, too, oft-repeated in the Qur'an, is God's design—it is still one family. Narratives of “progress” once provided legitimizing cover for the subjugation of peoples and appropriation of their resources, underpinned by notions of racial superiority that extended to wars of extermination. When all is said and done, exploitation of peoples and resources, and the resulting socio-economic injustices (increasingly inseparable from the mounting evidence of ecological harm), involve the creation of tribal and national rivalries, and the fear of an imagined other.

Speaking from within a tradition appears problematic when that tradition—as a system of peace and social justice—is seen to be discredited, tarred with the brush of intolerance, violent conflict and disharmony. We have discussed elsewhere the yawning gulf between representation and reality; and yet, if Islam is misrepresented externally and convulsed by distortion from within, we nonetheless remain convinced of the inherent mercy in the culture of Islam and its true principles of universal—universal because it is

rooted in natural law, social and economic justice. And nothing is more universal than the recognition of the unity of the human race and the equality of all human beings. It is inherent in both testimony and enactment of submission to God: *"I am your Creator," says He, "and you, O children of Adam, must know I sustain and cherish all."* In this view, human differentiation is measured not in terms of sectarian or racial identity, social status or privilege, but in true submission to God: *"O humankind! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in God's sight is the most righteous. Behold, God is all-knowing, all-aware."* (*Al-Hujurat*, 49:13)

The formation into nations and tribes, and the development of diverse cultures and systems, does not undermine the unity of the human family, nor its equality before God—a proposition maintained by the Prophet Muhammad throughout his life. The essential oneness of mankind was the core theme in his famous "farewell speech" and he exhorted those privileged to hear it to spread the message. The Prophet's appeal to mankind's oneness is a timeless reminder that humanity is sacrosanct and equality inviolable:

*"O people! Know indeed that your Lord is one, and that your father is one. Indeed, there is no superiority in the Arab over the non-Arab nor is there superiority in the non-Arab over the Arab. There is no superiority in white over the black nor is there superiority in the black over the white, except in righteousness. Have I, then, conveyed the Message?"* All in attendance replied: *"The Messenger of God has conveyed the message."* *"God has made sacred your money and your blood. Have I conveyed the message?"* And all in attendance replied: *"The Messenger of God has conveyed the message."* *"Behold, those present should convey the message to the remotest regions,"* said the Prophet. (Musnad Ahmad: 23489)

Humanism, in the Islamic expression, insists on the fundamental of human dignity—of the essential oneness of our species—regardless of a particular ethnic identity or tribal affiliation, so that all our social relations, be they individual or communal, between the individual and the state or between states, do not merely embrace "tolerance", but nurture a willing, harmonious coexistence. Therefore, the principle of unity in diversity and harmonious coexistence reflects the cosmic order. Humankind in its composition, individually and socially, is a microcosm of this cosmic order operating in just balance. For this very reason, the Prophets of old always exhorted a so-

cial justice foundation of equitable coexistence: the thread connects the past with the present. Scriptures and rituals are, in a manner, expressions of cosmic diversity but equitable coexistence (including humankind's ecological responsibility) is wholly dependent on a just balance. The timeless teachings of those Prophets offer much-needed remedies to our contemporary socio-economic imbalances that are both cause and symptom of division and intolerance.

Now loyalty to a nation, tribe or language group, or the preservation of heritage and traditions, are all inherent traits in mankind. Islam recognizes and even recommends such affiliations where they serve to strengthen social bonds. Diversity enables human beings to make contact, share knowledge and experience different customs. As the Qur'an reminds us: *"We have made you into nations and tribes that you might come to know one another."* (*Al-Hujurat*, 49:13) Diversity, then, from a single-origin source, is an expression of the Divine Will and the command to recognize our own oneness mirrors our recognition of God's oneness.

And the divine command to *"know one another,"* in its layered meaning, entails much more than mere toleration of difference—it implies a whole-hearted embrace of kindred beings. Human history is blotted with conflict fuelled by tribal and sectarian rejection. The wars of princes, often under cover of religion, are not yet things of the past, while supposedly enlightened modernity has witnessed the terrible destruction of globe-spanning world wars. The first quarter of the 21st Century, with its grandiloquent claims of new world orders and rules-based systems, is no less stained with blood. Millions of lives have been lost in internecine conflicts in the name of race or religion. While unholy alliances of race and religion are depressingly common features of geopolitical power plays, their architects are driven by little more than callous economic interest, as if God somehow is unaware of motives. *"Does He not know—He Who has created? Indeed, He alone is unfathomable, all-aware!"* (*Al-Mulk*, 67:14).

Racial and cultural differences are, of course, not unimportant markers of identity and sense of being, markers that allow an individual to say, *"This is my heritage,"* or a community to declare, *"This is our tradition."* These identities have histories with their material and symbolic effects and the past will always speak to the present. But such identifications are also unstable, made and re-made through memory, experience, environment, narrative and social contract. In any case, those who exploit racial identity are always



on unstable ground since racial identifications are subject to history and thus in perpetual transformation. The constant, in Islam, is that all racial identities must cleave to the oneness of humankind, for God says: *"Had God so willed, He could surely have made you all one single community; however, He lets go astray him that wills to go astray and guides aright him that wills to be guided..."* (Al-Nahl, 16:93). Diversity, as mentioned, is the Divine Will, part of the Divine Plan, but it is the misguided who wilfully reject the unity within the diversity. Globalization and technological progress have also functioned to increase contact between different peoples and diverse cultures and these reasons should encourage us to reaffirm our shared humanity.

That so much strife has been attributed to religious conflict even as we are commanded to "know one another" does not, of course, diminish the authentic teachings of Muhammad SAW, the Prophet Jesus and the Prophet Moses, or Buddha or Confucius, or that any religious tradition should be held responsible for the acts of misguided individuals or sects. As mentioned, the principle of human unity in diversity and harmonious coexistence fundamental to Islam reflects the just balance of the cosmic order. In its recognition of human oneness as well as human diversity, Islamic humanism historically paved the way for fusing people of diverse ethnicities and beliefs to live and thrive harmoniously. Islamic tradition, then, is not so easily discredited. Of course, ideal and reality may not always match, but its exhortation of unity and equality makes the true culture of Islam the proper expression and style for modern societies. Approached without bias or distortion, the Qur'an and the Prophetic paradigm reveal the true

template and expression of the just balance. Its purest expression is the most illuminating light for all nations. Its greatest embodiment obliterated every current form of social injustice (that the Prophet's struggle was a 23-year-long enterprise of total devotion is enough to know that wishful thinking is not for the serious). His embrace of common humanity is the signature style of a universal culture. Examples from the life of the Holy Prophet are legion. On one illuminating occasion, he was observed in a reclining position but stood up on his feet for a passing Jewish funeral cortege. Asked about his standing, an obvious act of respect, the Prophet replied: *"Is it not a human soul?"* (Muslim: 961) Bilal "the Abyssinian" was handpicked over Arab kinsmen and compatriots to be the Prophet's muezzin. Newly freed from bondage, Bilal's appointment to high public office in such a stratified society further appalled the proudest among those who rejected the egalitarian message of Islam—but the Qur'an is emphatic: *"Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one best in conduct. Behold, God is all-knowing, all-aware."* (Al-Hujurat, 49:13)

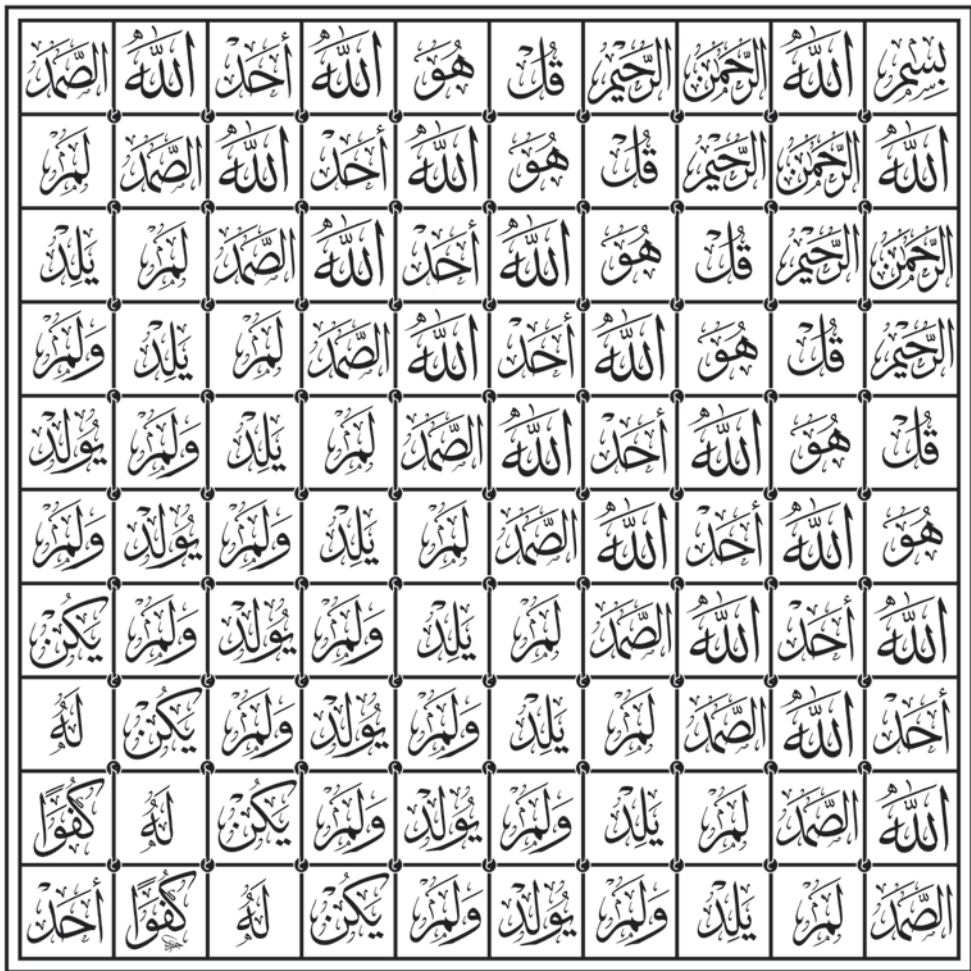
In the context of seventh-century Arabia, Bilal's elevation from torturous bondage to social pre-eminence was a remarkable triumph over racial and tribal biases. If today, citizens in majoritarian-white societies are able to elect "persons of colour" to high office, it is also true that Islam set numerous precedents fifteen centuries ago. We have spoken elsewhere about civilization in Islam, suffice to say here that the world would greatly benefit from the authentic expression of Islam as embodied in the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

---

Sheikh Faid Mohammed Said is currently General Secretary of the Fatwa and Islamic Affairs commission and Imam and Khateeb of the Central Mosque in London.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ  
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Al-Hujurat, 49:13



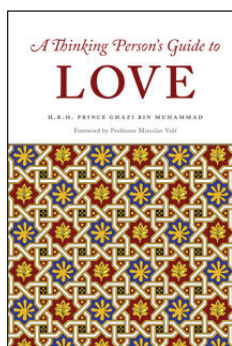
In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Say: 'He is God, One. ☪ God, the Self-Sufficient, Besought of all. ☪ He neither begot, nor was begotten. ☪ Nor is there anyone equal to Him'. ☪

*The Unity, 1-4*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

# BOOK CORNER



HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal

## *A Thinking Person's Guide to Love*

White Thread Press

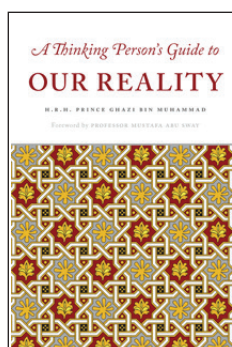
*A Thinking Person's Guide To Love* took five years to write and over 30 years to research. It is a multi-disciplinary work of the humanities and can be read

as a compendium of the last 3,000 years of human wisdom on love. To make its points and conclusions it draws from literature, poetry, history, psychology, sociology, anthropology, art, religion, mysticism, music, and drama.

Some of the questions the book answers are: What is Love? What is Beauty? How Does Love Work? What is Falling in Love and How Does it Work? and

Who Loves? It offers a definition of love and of falling in love, and discusses the kinds, hierarchies and degrees of love. It also explains the stages of love and of falling in love and why, how, when and where they occur. Some of the other themes the book discusses are infatuation and obsession, love at first sight, jealousy, first love, soul mates, marriage, and unrequited love.

In the book Prince Ghazi says that his aim in writing it is "both to encourage people to let themselves love and fall in love, and then to do so responsibly in a way that they do not wind up destroying themselves or others through that love." Despite it tackling a complex subject, it is accessible and entertaining and very often beautifully lyrical.



HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal

## *A Thinking Person's Guide to Our Reality*

White Thread Press

Written in response to a request from his son to impart 'all the advice he needed for the rest of his life in one book,' in the sixth book of the *A Thinking*

*Person's Guides* and *A Tentative Guides* Series, HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad offers a stunning and succinct gem of a book.

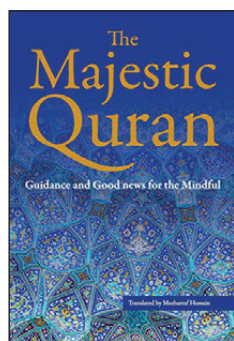
Written in a didactic narrative tone, the book's brevity and succinctness serve to drive home the ten sacred passages—seven from the Qur'an and three from the Hadith—that the book meditates on. The Qur'anic passages are: *Surat Al-Fatihah*, *Surat Al-Ikhlās*, *Ayat Al-Kursi*, *Surat Al-ʿAsr*, the second and

third verses of *Surat Al-Talaq*, and verses 151-157 of *Surat Al-Baqarah*, and verses 7-10 of *Surat Yunus*. The Hadiths are: *Hadith "Al-Kayyis"*, the Hadith "The world is accursed", and the Hadith "The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried." Prince Ghazi exhorts the reader to "contemplate them until they are part of you, or, rather, until you are part of them ... for indeed they are signposts for true life."

*A Thinking Person's Guide To Our Reality* is a practical complement to Prince Ghazi's previous book in the series *A Thinking Person's Guide to Our Times* (White Thread Press and Turath Publishing, 2019) and the two books are meant to be read as a pair. The previous books "looks outwardly at the world", while *A Thinking Person's Guide To Our Reality* "looks inwardly at ourselves". Together the two books serve the aim of knowing ourselves and knowing our reality.

HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal of Jordan (b. 1966 CE) was educated at Harrow School, UK; received his BA Summa cum Laude from Princeton University, NJ, USA; his first PhD from Trinity College, Cambridge University, UK, and his second PhD from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. He is a Professor of Islamic Philosophy and his book *Love in the Holy Qur'an* has been widely acclaimed, has gone into ten editions and has been translated into a number of languages. He also serves as Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein of Jordan.





Musharraf Hussain

## The Majestic Qur'an: A Plain English Translation

Invitation Publishing

This reader-friendly presentation of the translation of the Qur'an will help you understand the topic you are reading, and learn the moving and transformative message of the Qur'an.

There are 1,500 sections with headings. The infallible word of Allah is a literary masterpiece of

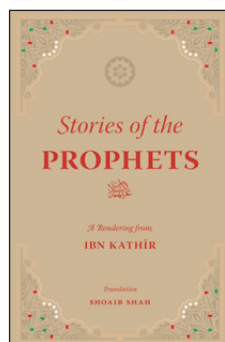
brehtaking beauty, revealed by the Most Gracious and Loving Lord in an authoritative yet gentle, poetic language.

This refreshing and beautiful presentation of the message of the glorious Qur'an is accurate, and reads easily and flows smoothly. The notes help to explain special Islamic concepts and Qur'anic terms, as well as Arabic metaphors and idioms. This landmark translation will appeal to English readers globally.

---

Dr Musharraf Hussain is a distinguished scholar. He is the Chief Executive of Karimia Institute (Nottingham, UK). He was born in Pakistan and settled in the UK in 1966. He demonstrated exceptional academic talent from a young age, memorising the Qur'an and mastering Tajweed and Qur'anic Arabic. Dr Hussain's pursuit of Islamic knowledge led him to study under renowned scholars in Pakistan and Egypt. He has received numerous accolades for his outstanding services to community relations in Britain, including an OBE in 2008.

---



Imam 'Imad ad-Din Abu'l-Fida Isma'il ibn Umar ibn Kathir

## *Stories of the Prophets, a Rendering from Ibn Kathir*

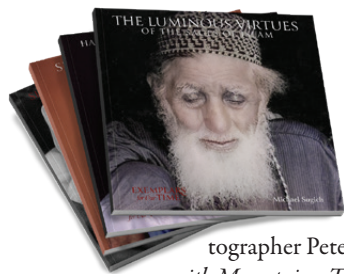
Turath Publishings

Extracted from the celebrated Ibn Kathir's *al-Bidayah wa'n-Nihayah Qasas al-Anbiya* is a detailed look at the rich, lesson-filled lives of the Prophets, upon them be eternal blessings and peace. This classic work seeks to reconnect Muslims to the stories of

the Qur'an and the excellent example of the Prophets. In this book, Ibn Kathir presents verses from the Qur'an, complimented by narrations from the final Prophet ﷺ. Sources from the previous scriptures are also consulted but with critical analysis of their veracity. May Allah (swt) instill in us the beautiful qualities of the best humankind and may He unite us with them in Firdaws al-A'la. Amin.

---

Imaad Ed-Din Isma'il Ibn 'Umar Ibn ibn Kathir was born in the year 700 AH or a little later in an area called Majdal (in modern-day Syria), near Busra. His father died when he was only four years old and was taken in by his brother and moved to Damascus in 706. Here, he learned from great scholars such as Ibn Asakir, Ishaq ibn Yahya Al-Amudi and the great Ibn Taymiyyah who was extremely close to him. He followed the Shafi'i school of thought. Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani said, "Ibn Kathir lost his sight just before his life ended." He died in Damascus in 774 AH May Allah grant him Mercy and make him amongst the residents of *Jannah*. Ameen



Michael Sugich, Peter Sanders, et al.

## *Exemplars of Our Time*

### Mecca Books

Internationally acclaimed photographer Peter Sanders (*Meetings with Mountains, The Art of Integration, In the Shade of a Tree*) and popular author Michael Sugich (*Signs on the Horizons, Hearts Turn*) have joined forces to produce *Exemplars of Our Time*, a deluxe limited edition nine-book box set of illustrated biographies of some of the most influential and inspiring Muslim saints and sages in our time.

This unique series profiles the lives of Sayyida Fatima Yashrutiyya, Habib Ahmad Mashhur Al-Hadd-

ad, Shaykh Murabit Al-Hajj, Muzaffer Ozak Efendi, Sidi Muhammad ibn Al-Habib, Sufi 'Abd Allah Khan, Sayyid 'Umar 'Abd Allah Mwinyi Baraka, and Shaykh Salih Al-Ja'fari.

Biographers include Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Dr Mostafa Al-Badawi, Shems Friedlander, Dr Karim Lahham, Dr Samer Dajani, and Michael Sugich. Each book is beautifully illustrated with the photography of Peter Sanders, Shems Friedlander, and others, as well as rare images from the lives and times of these great souls.

---

Michael Sugich is a native of Santa Barbara, California and studied at UCLA and the California Institute of the Arts. He was initiated into a traditional Sufi order in 1972. Since that time he has studied Sufi doctrine and practice with spiritual masters across the Arab and Islamic world. He lived for 23 years in the precincts of the sacred city of Makkah Al-Mukarrama where he kept company with many men of knowledge and illumination. He has been a professional writer and communications advisor for 40 years.

Peter Sanders began his career in the mid 1960s photographing the rock n' roll icons and documenting the culture of that time. In 1970, he set off for India, cameras in hand travelling for seven months. This trip became a spiritual odyssey that led him onto Morocco and thereafter to the Holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, where he photographed the Hajj, at a time when few professional photographers gained access to Islam's holiest sanctuaries. During the following 50 years he has travelled extensively around the world documenting societies and cultures often hidden from view.



## *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt Deluxe Box Set*

### Signatora

A carefully crafted masterpiece for the Muslim Ummah, a rich token to preserve our tradition, and an heirloom for future generations to enjoy.

The *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* Box Set includes accurate facsimile Arabic edition, complemented with

a remarkable translation of this important book complemented by the accompanying guidebook *Introduction to Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* authored by Shaykh Muhammad al-Yaqoubi, form a truly remarkable trilogy set.

All three books are carefully contained within a bespoke box.

---

Abū 'Abdullah Muhammad ibn Sulaymān ibn Abū Bakr al-Jazūlī al-Simlālī, often known as Imam al-Jazuli or Sheikh Jazuli, was a Moroccan Sufi saint who died in 870 AH. He studied *usul al-fiqh* and Maliki law at the Madrasat As-Saffarīn in Fez. He also met the famous jurist and mystic Ahmad Zarruq during his studies. He left Morocco and spent the next 40 years in Makkah, Madinah and Jerusalem. After his long journey, he returned to Fez where he completed the prayer book *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt*.

# MAJOR EVENTS

# Major Events

## 2022

### OCTOBER

- 29 A double car bombing by al-Shabaab in Mogadishu, Somalia kills at least 121 people and injures around 300.
- 30 The collapse of a suspension bridge in Gujarat, India, leaves at least 135 dead.

### NOVEMBER

- 15 The world population reaches 8 billion.
- 19 The 2022 Malaysian general election results in a hung parliament, which is the first in the country's history. Long-time opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim is appointed by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Abdullah as prime minister five days later to break the political deadlock and form a unity government.

### DECEMBER

- 14 The Moroccan football team make history by reaching the semi-finals, where they are defeated by France
- 18 The 2022 FIFA World Cup is held in Qatar and won by Argentina.
- 21 A 5.6 earthquake strikes near Cianjur in West Java, Indonesia, killing 635 people and injuring 7,700 more.

## 2023

### JANUARY

- 10-17 A deadly cold snap in Afghanistan kills 166 people and nearly 80,000 livestock.
- 27 Widespread unrest erupts in Israel following an Israeli military raid in Jenin which left nine Palestinians dead. Incendiary air balloons are launched into Israeli-populated areas following it. Israel responds with targeted airstrikes. Later the same day, seven Jewish civilians are murdered in a synagogue in Neve Yaakov in a terrorist attack.
- 30 A Jamaat-ul-Ahrar suicide bombing inside a mosque in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, kills 84 people and injures over 220 others.

### FEBRUARY

- 6 2023 Turkey-Syria earthquake: A 7.8 Mww earthquake strikes Gaziantep Province in southeastern Turkey. A 7.5 Mww aftershock occurs on the same day in nearby Kahramanmaraş Province. Widespread damage and at least 59,000 deaths are caused in Turkey and Syria, with more than 121,000 injured.
- 13 The 2023 Bangladeshi presidential election scheduled for 19 February is held, with Shahabuddin Chuppu of the Awami League, the only nominated candidate, elected unopposed.
- 16 The Abrahamic Family House, Interfaith Complex in Abu Dhabi, opens to the public
- 20 A magnitude 6.4 earthquake, an aftershock of the earlier February 6 earthquake, strikes southern Turkey and is also felt in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.

### MARCH

- 10 Iran and Saudi Arabia agree to resume diplomatic relations which were severed in 2016 at talks mediated by China.
- 30 The International Court of Justice rules that the United States violated its Treaty of Amity with Iran when it allowed its domestic courts to freeze assets held by Iranian companies.

### APRIL

- 5 Clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli police happen at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.



- 11 Shehbaz Sharif elected as Pakistan's new prime minister by parliament following the removal of Imran Khan in a no-confidence vote
- 15 Fighting breaks out across Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The RSF captures Khartoum International Airport, and the presidential palace in Khartoum.
- 19 At least 90 people are killed and another 322 injured in a crowd crush during a Ramadan charity event in Sanaa, Yemen.
- 21 Eid Al-Fitr

## MAY

- 5 The World Health Organization ends its declaration of COVID-19 being a global health emergency, but continues to refer to it as a pandemic.
- 7 Syria is readmitted into the Arab League after being suspended since 2011.
- 9 Cyclone Mocha forms in the Indian Ocean, killing over 400 people and injuring over 700 as it strikes Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- 24 Canada and Saudi Arabia agree to restore full diplomatic relations after a breakdown in relations in 2018 over the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi.
- 27 The second round of the 2023 Mauritanian parliamentary election is held; with the ruling El Insaf Party receiving the most votes.
- 28 The second round of the 2023 Turkish presidential election is held; Recep Tayyip Erdoğan defeats Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu with 52.18% of the vote to win a third term as president.

## JUNE

- 6 The 2023 Kuwaiti general election is held following the annulment of the results of the 2022 snap elections by the Constitutional Court. 38 members retained their seats from the annulled 2022 session, while two returned from the dissolved 2020 session. Ten new MPs were elected for the first time.
- 19 Qatar and the United Arab Emirates announce that they will restore diplomatic relations after relations were suspended during the Qatar diplomatic crisis.
- 28 Eid-al Adha
- 30 The United Nations Security Council votes unanimously to end MINUSMA, its peacekeeping mission in Mali.

## JULY

- 3 In the largest incursion by Israel into the West Bank since the Second Intifada, the Israeli military deploys ground forces and armed drones into the Jenin camp, killing 13 and injuring more than 100. An attack claimed by Hamas as retaliation for the incursion, occurs in Tel Aviv the following day, injuring nine.
- 19 1 Muharram 1445 AH - Islamic New Year
- 20 Bolivia and Iran sign a memorandum of understanding, in an upgrade of bilateral relations, expanding cooperation in the security and defense sectors.
- 21 Sweden's ambassadors have been summoned in various countries following a second event held to desecrate the Quran, Islam's holy book, was held in Sweden
- 26 President Mohamed Bazoum of Niger is toppled in a coup d'état after members of his presidential guard and the armed forces seize control of the country and install General Abdourahamane Tchiani as leader of a military junta.
- 30 Morocco's Nouhaila Benzina becomes first player to wear hijab at the women's World Cup Football tournament

## AUGUST

- 14-16 The death toll from fighting in Tripoli between the 444 brigade and the RADA Special Deterrence Force increases to 55 people, with 146 more injured. The fight ended after the release of a commander.

- 21 Saudi Arabia is accused of mass killing hundreds of African migrants attempting to cross its border with Yemen.

## SEPTEMBER

- 6 Over 20 million pilgrims visit Karbala, Iraq, during 'Arbaeen' commemoration marking the 40th day of mourning for Imam Hussein the grandson of the Prophet
- 8 A 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck Morocco's High Atlas Mountains 70 kilometres from Marrakesh killing 2,800 and affecting over 300,000 people
- 10 Storm Daniel hits north-eastern Libya, causing strong winds and sudden heavy rainfall. In the port city of Derna, two dams burst under the pressure and entire neighbourhoods are destroyed by the three-metre-high flood waters. Over 10,000 people were killed,
- 19 Azerbaijan launches a military offensive against the Armenia-backed Republic of Artsakh.

## OCTOBER

- 7 A surprise attack by Palestinian group Hamas on Israel – combining gunmen breaching security barriers and a barrage of rockets fired from Gaza.

A 6.3 magnitude earthquake and its aftershocks in the region around Herat, Afghanistan kills more than 2,000 people.



In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Truly those who believe and perform righteous deeds, their Lord will guide them through their faith. Rivers will flow beneath them in the Gardens of Bliss, ۞ their prayer therein: 'Glory be to You, O God!', and their greeting therein will be: 'Peace'. And their final prayer will be: 'Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds'. ۞

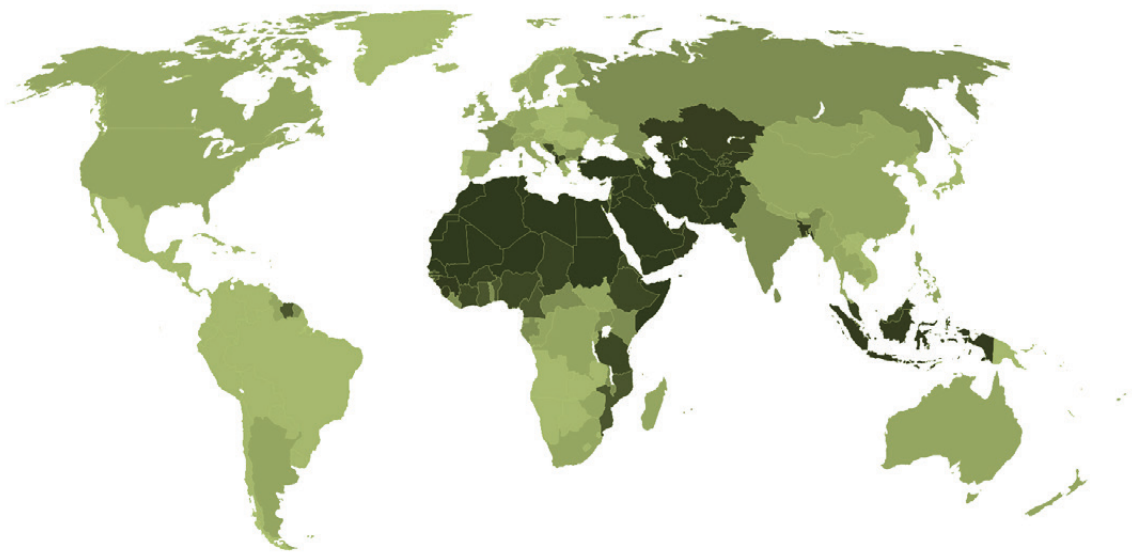
*Jonah, 9-10*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

# APPENDIX I

## Population Statistics

# World Muslim Population



Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Afghanistan	42,239,854	99.7	42,113,134
Albania	2,832,439	58.8	1,665,474
Algeria	45,606,480	99	45,150,415
American Samoa	43,914	< 0.1	< 44
Andorra	80,088	2.6	2,082
Angola	36,684,202	0.3	110,053
Anguilla	15,899	0.6	95
Antigua and Barbuda	94,298	0.3	283
Argentina	45,773,884	0.9	411,965
Armenia	2,777,970	0.03	833
Aruba	106,277	0.4	425
Australia	26,439,111	3.2	846,052
Austria	8,958,960	8	716,717
Azerbaijan	10,412,651	97.3	10,131,509
Bahamas	412,623	0.1	413
Bahrain	1,485,509	73.7	1,094,820



Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Bangladesh	172,954,319	91	157,388,430
Barbados	281,995	1.5	4,230
Belarus	9,498,238	0.5	47,491
Belgium	11,686,140	7.6	888,147
Belize	410,825	0.2	822
Benin	13,712,828	27.7	3,798,453
Bermuda	64,069	1	641
Bhutan	787,424	0.2	1,575
Bolivia	12,388,571	< 0.1	< 12,389
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3,210,847	50.7	1,627,899
Botswana	2,675,352	0.4	10,701
Brazil	216,422,446	0.1	216,422
British Virgin Islands	31,538	1.2	378
Brunei	452,524	80.9	366,092
Bulgaria	6,687,717	13.4	896,154
Burkina Faso	23,251,485	63.8	14,834,447
Burundi	13,238,559	10	1,323,856
Cambodia	16,944,826	2	338,897
Cameroon	28,647,293	30	8,594,188
Canada	38,781,291	4.9	1,900,283
Cape Verde	598,682	2	11,974
Cayman Islands	69,310	0.2	139
Central African Republic	5,742,315	15	861,347
Chad	18,278,568	58	10,601,569
Chile	19,629,590	< 0.1	< 19,630
China	1,425,671,352	1.7	24,236,413
Colombia	52,085,168	0.2	104,170
Comoros	852,075	98.3	837,590
Congo	6,106,869	2	122,137
Cook Islands	17,044	< 0.1	< 17
Costa Rica	5,212,173	< 0.1	< 5,212
Croatia	4,008,617	1.5	60,129
Cuba	11,194,449	0.1	11,194
Cyprus	1,260,138	25.3	318,815
Czech Republic	10,495,295	0.2	20,991
Denmark	5,910,913	5.4	319,189

Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Djibouti	1,136,455	97	1,102,361
Dominica	73,040	0.2	146
Dominican Republic	11,332,972	< 0.1	< 11333
DR Congo	102,262,808	10	10,226,281
Ecuador	18,190,484	< 0.1	< 18190
Egypt	112,716,598	90	101,444,938
El Salvador	6,364,943	0.28	17,822
Equatorial Guinea	1,714,671	10	171,467
Eritrea	3,748,901	36.6	1,372,098
Estonia	1,322,765	< 0.1	< 1323
Eswatini	1,210,822	2	24,216
Ethiopia	126,527,060	31.3	39,602,970
Falkland Islands	3,791	< 0.1	< 4
Faroe Islands	53,270	< 0.1	< 53
Fiji	936,375	6.3	58,992
Finland	5,545,475	1.8	99,819
France	64,756,584	8.8	5,698,579
French Guiana	312,155	0.9	2,809
French Polynesia	308,872	< 0.1	< 309
Gabon	2,436,566	10	243,657
Gambia	2,773,168	96.4	2,673,334
Georgia	3,728,282	10.7	398,926
Germany	83,294,633	6.7	5,580,740
Ghana	34,121,985	19.9	6,790,275
Gibraltar	32,688	4	1,308
Greece	10,341,277	2	206,826
Greenland	56,643	< 0.1	< 57
Grenada	126,183	0.3	379
Guadeloupe	395,839	0.4	1,583
Guam	172,952	< 0.1	< 173
Guatemala	18,092,026	< 0.1	< 18092
Guinea	14,190,612	89.1	12,643,835
Guinea-Bissau	2,150,842	46.1	991,538
Guyana	813,834	7.3	59,410
Haiti	11,724,763	< 0.1	< 11725
Honduras	10,593,798	0.3	31,781

Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Hong Kong	7,491,609	4.1	307,156
Hungary	10,156,239	< 0.1	< 10156
Iceland	375,318	0.2	751
India	1,428,627,663	14.6	208,579,639
Indonesia	277,534,122	86.7	240,622,084
Iran	89,172,767	99.4	88,637,730
Iraq	45,504,560	95.7	43,547,864
Ireland	5,056,935	1.4	70,797
Isle of Man	84,710	0.2	169
Israel	9,174,520	18	1,651,414
Italy	58,870,762	4.8	2,825,797
Ivory Coast	28,873,034	42.9	12,386,532
Jamaica	2,825,544	0.2	5,651
Japan	123,294,513	0.1	123,295
Jordan	11,337,052	97.2	11,019,615
Kazakhstan	19,606,633	70.2	13,763,856
Kenya	55,100,586	11.2	6,171,266
Kiribati	133,515	< 0.1	< 134
Kosovo	1,770,003	95.6	1,692,123
Kuwait	4,310,108	74.6	3,215,341
Kyrgyzstan	6,735,347	90	6,061,812
Laos	7,633,779	< 0.1	< 7634
Latvia	1,830,211	0.2	3,660
Lebanon	5,353,930	67.8	3,629,965
Lesotho	2,330,318	0.1	2,330
Liberia	5,418,377	20	1,083,675
Libya	6,888,388	97	6,681,736
Liechtenstein	39,584	5.4	2,138
Lithuania	2,718,352	0.1	2,718
Luxembourg	654,768	2.3	15,060
Macau	704,149	0.1	704
Madagascar	30,325,732	10	3,032,573
Malawi	20,931,751	20	4,186,350
Malaysia	34,308,525	63.5	21,785,913
Maldives	521,021	98.4	512,685
Mali	23,293,698	95	22,129,013

Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Malta	535,064	2.6	13,912
Marshall Islands	41,996	< 0.1	< 42
Martinique	366,981	0.2	734
Mauritania	4,862,989	99.9	4,858,126
Mauritius	1,300,557	17.3	224,996
Mayotte	335,995	97	325,915
Mexico	128,455,567	0.01	12,846
Micronesia	544,321	< 0.1	< 544
Moldova	3,435,931	0.4	13,744
Monaco	36,297	0.8	290
Mongolia	3,447,157	5	172,358
Montenegro	626,485	19.1	119,659
Montserrat	4,386	0.1	4
Morocco	37,840,044	99	37,461,644
Mozambique	33,897,354	18.9	6,406,600
Myanmar	54,577,997	4.3	2,346,854
Namibia	2,604,172	0.4	10,417
Nauru	12,780	< 0.1	< 13
Nepal	30,896,590	4.2	1,297,657
Netherlands	17,618,299	5	880,915
New Caledonia	292,991	2.8	8,204
New Zealand	5,228,100	0.9	47,053
Nicaragua	7,046,310	< 0.1	< 7046
Niger	27,202,843	98.3	26,740,395
Nigeria	223,804,632	48.5	108,545,247
Niue	1,935	< 0.1	< 2
North Korea	26,160,821	0.1	26,161
North Macedonia	2,085,679	33.3	694,531
Northern Mariana Islands	49,796	0.7	349
Norway	5,474,360	3.2	175,180
Oman	4,644,384	86	3,994,170
Pakistan	240,485,658	96.5	232,068,660
Palau	18,058	< 0.1	< 18
Palestine	5,371,230	97.5	5,236,949
Panama	4,468,087	0.7	31,277
Papua New Guinea	10,329,931	< 0.1	< 10330



Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Paraguay	6,861,524	< 0.1	< 6862
Peru	34,352,719	< 0.1	< 34353
Philippines	117,337,368	6.4	7,509,592
Poland	41,026,067	0.02	8,205
Portugal	10,247,605	0.4	40,990
Puerto Rico	3,260,314	< 0.1	< 3260
Qatar	2,716,391	77.5	2,105,203
Réunion	981,796	4.2	41,235
Romania	19,892,812	1	198,928
Russia	144,444,359	18	25,999,985
Rwanda	14,094,683	4.8	676,545
Saint Helena	5,314	< 0.1	< 5
Saint Kitts & Nevis	47,755	0.3	143
Saint Lucia	180,251	< 0.1	< 180
Saint Pierre & Miquelon	5,840	0.2	12
Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	103,698	1.7	1,763
Samoa	225,681	< 0.1	< 226
San Marino	33,642	< 0.1	< 34
São Tomé and Príncipe	231,856	3	6,956
Saudi Arabia	36,947,025	96.2	35,543,038
Senegal	17,763,163	97.2	17,265,794
Serbia	7,149,077	2.1	150,131
Seychelles	107,660	1.1	1,184
Sierra Leone	8,791,092	78.6	6,909,798
Singapore	6,014,723	15.6	938,297
Slovakia	5,795,199	0.1	5,795
Slovenia	2,119,675	3.6	76,308
Solomon Islands	740,424	< 0.1	< 740
Somalia	18,143,378	99.8	18,107,091
South Africa	60,414,495	1.9	1,147,875
South Korea	51,784,059	0.1	51,784
South Sudan	11,088,796	20	2,217,759
Spain	47,519,628	2.6	1,235,510
Sri Lanka	21,893,579	9.7	2,123,677
Sudan	48,109,006	96	46,184,646
Suriname	623,236	14.3	89,123

Country/Region	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Sweden	10,612,086	7.1	753,458
Switzerland	8,796,669	5.2	457,427
Syria	23,227,014	86	19,975,232
Taiwan	23,923,276	0.3	71,770
Tajikistan	10,143,543	97.9	9,930,529
Tanzania	67,438,106	35.2	23,738,213
Thailand	71,801,279	5.4	3,877,269
Timor-Leste	1,360,596	0.1	1,361
Togo	9,053,799	20	1,810,760
Tokelau	1,893	< 0.1	< 2
Tonga	107,773	< 0.1	< 108
Trinidad and Tobago	1,534,937	5.8	89,026
Tunisia	12,458,223	97.8	12,184,142
Turkey	85,816,199	96.2	82,555,183
Turkmenistan	6,516,100	93.7	6,105,586
Turks and Caicos Islands	46,062	< 0.1	< 46
Tuvalu	11,396	0.1	11
U.S. Virgin Islands	98,750	0.1	99
Uganda	48,582,334	14	6,801,527
Ukraine	36,744,634	6	2,204,678
United Arab Emirates	9,516,871	72	6,852,147
United Kingdom	67,736,802	3.3	2,235,314
United States	339,996,563	1.1	3,739,962
Uruguay	3,423,108	< 0.1	< 3423
Uzbekistan	35,163,944	88.7	31,190,418
Vanuatu	334,506	< 0.1	< 335
Vatican City	518	0	0
Venezuela	28,838,499	0.4	115,354
Vietnam	98,858,950	0.1	98,859
Wallis & Futuna	11,502	< 0.1	< 12
Western Sahara	587,259	99.4	583,735
Yemen	34,449,825	97.2	33,485,230
Zambia	20,569,737	1	205,697
Zimbabwe	16,665,409	0.7	116,658
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,045,365,088</b>	<b>25.79%</b>	<b>2,074,718,394</b>

Muslim population statistics taken from Wikipedia. org. World populations taken from www. worldometers. info.

# APPENDIX II

## Social Media Statistics

## Top Social Media Statistics of *The Muslim 500*

This is a list showing the most popular social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) run by Muslims.

(Rounded values in millions)

Rank	Name	Age	Country
1	Khaby Lama	23	Italy
2	Salman Khan	57	India
3	Shahrukh Khan	57	India
4	Paul Pogba	30	France
5	Mohamed Salah	31	Egypt
6	Mesut Özil	34	Germany
7	Huda Kattan	40	USA
8	Shaquille O' Neal	51	USA
9	Mustafa Hosny	45	Egypt
10	DJ Khaled	47	USA
11	AKON	49	USA
12	Tamer Hosny	46	Egypt
13	Ahmad Al Shugairi	50	Saudi Arabia
14	A.R. Rahman	56	India
15	Amr Diab	61	Egypt
16	Ahmed Helmy	54	Egypt
17	Ice Cube	54	USA
18	Amr Khaled	56	Egypt
19	Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid Alafasy	47	Kuwait
20	Khabib Nurmagomedov	35	Russia
21	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	69	Türkiye
22	Imran Khan	71	Pakistan
23	Muhammad Alarefe	53	Saudi Arabia
24	Aidh Al-Qarni	64	Saudi Arabia
25	Zinedine Zidane	51	France
26	HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah	53	Jordan
27	Maher Zain	42	Sweden
28	Hanna Elzahed	29	Egypt
29	Ahlam Alshamsi	55	UAE
30	Haifa Wehbe	51	Lebanon
31	Atif Aslam	40	Pakistan
32	Ahmed Abou Hashima	48	Egypt
33	Ahlam Mustaghanami	70	Algeria
34	Yasmin Sabri	35	Egypt
35	Kadim Al Sahir	66	Iraq



Occupations	Facebook	X	Instagram	TikTok	Total
Media	3m	0m	81m	162m	245m
Actor	51m	45m	65m	0m	161m
Actor	43m	44m	41m	0m	127m
Sports	25m	11m	60m	3m	99m
Footballer	17m	18m	62m	0m	98m
Footballer	38m	26m	27m	0m	91m
Entrepreneur	8m	0m	53m	9m	70m
Sports	10m	16m	32m	12m	69m
Preacher	36m	13m	21m	0m	69m
Musician	21m	6m	37m	5m	68m
Musician	53m	6m	9m	1m	68m
Musician	24m	4m	28m	4m	59m
Show Host	21m	18m	17m	0m	56m
Musician	24m	24m	8m	0m	56m
Musician	22m	12m	22m	0m	55m
Actor	18m	10m	18m	7m	53m
Rapper	17m	6m	30m	0m	52m
Preacher	32m	11m	6m	0m	48m
Qur'an Reciter	23m	15m	8m	0m	45m
Sports	5m	2m	35m	0m	42m
Politician	10m	21m	12m	0m	42m
Politician	14m	20m	9m	0m	42m
Scholar	22m	19m	0m	0m	41m
Scholar	16m	21m	4m	0m	40m
Sports	0m	0m	40m	0m	40m
Royalty	18m	10m	10m	0m	38m
Musician	29m	2m	7m	0m	37m
Acress	7m	2m	19m	7m	35m
Musician	10m	9m	15m	1m	34m
Musician	14m	7m	12m	0m	33m
Musician	24m	1m	7m	0m	32m
Businessman			26m	0m	31m
Novelist	14m	14m	1m	0m	28m
Artist	0m	5m	21m	0m	26m
Musician	15m	7m	4m	0m	26m

# Top Social Media Statistics of the General Public

This is a list showing the most popular social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).  
(Rounded values in millions)

Rank	Name	Age	Country
1	Cristiano Ronaldo	38	Portugal
2	Selena Gomez	31	USA
3	Lionel Messi (Leo Messi)	36	Argentina
4	Ariana Grande	30	USA
5	Dwayne Johnson (The Rock)	51	USA
6	Justin Bieber	29	Canada
7	Kylie Jenner	26	USA
8	Kim Kardashian	43	USA
9	Taylor Swift	34	USA
10	Jennifer Lopez	54	USA
11	Neymar	31	Brazil
12	Katy Perry	39	USA
13	Beyonce	42	USA
14	Khloé Kardashian	39	USA
15	Rihanna	34	Barbados
16	Virat Kohli	35	India
17	Kendal Jenner	27	USA
18	Nicki Minaj	41	USA
19	Miley Cyrus	31	USA
20	Shakira	46	Colombia
21	Kevin Hart	44	USA
22	Will Smith	55	USA
23	Demi Lovato	31	USA
24	LeBron James	38	USA
25	Drake	36	Canada
26	Chris Brown	34	USA
27	Barack Obama	62	USA
28	Narendra Modi	73	India
29	Vin Diesel	55	USA
30	Charli D'Amelio	19	USA
31	Lady Gaga	37	USA
32	Billie Eilish	21	USA
33	David Beckham	48	UK
34	Justin Timberlake	42	USA
35	Priyanka Chopra	41	India

Occupations	Facebook	X	Instagram	TikTok	Total
Footballer	166m	109m	603m	0m	878m
Musician	89m	67m	428m	59m	643m
Footballer	115m	0m	486m	0m	600m
Actress	42m	0m	379m	169m	589m
Wrestler	64m	17m	390m	72m	543m
Musician	92m	112m	293m	27m	523m
Media	33m	40m	390m	55m	517m
Reality Star	35m	75m	364m	7m	481m
Musician	79m	94m	272m	21m	466m
Musician	62m	45m	251m	63m	421m
Footballer	91m	63m	214m	31m	398m
Musician	72m	107m	205m	10m	394m
Musician	57m	15m	317m	5m	389m
Media	24m	30m	312m	6m	372m
Musician	105m	108m	153m	6m	371m
Cricketer	51m	58m	258m	0m	366m
Model and Media	21m	32m	294m	16m	363m
Musician	48m	28m	256m	19m	350m
Musician	48m	47m	214m	18m	326m
Musician	124m	54m	89m	38m	304m
Comedian	36m	37m	179m	35m	287m
Actor	116m	0m	64m	73m	253m
Actress - Musician	33m	53m	157m	6m	249m
Sports	27m	53m	158m	0m	238m
Musician	52m	39m	142m	0m	233m
Musician	50m	32m	144m	0m	225m
Politician	56m	132m	37m	0m	224m
Politician	48m	91m	78m	0m	217m
Actor	106m	0m	99m	3m	208m
Media	3m	5m	47m	151m	205m
Musician	56m	84m	56m	9m	204m
Musician	32m	7m	110m	51m	200m
Footballer	57m	0m	83m	48m	187m
Musician	41m	61m	71m	2m	175m
Actress	56m	28m	89m	0m	172m

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- ③ أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ② وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ  
⑤ الَّذِي أَنْفَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ④ وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ  
فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ⑥ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ⑦ فَإِذَا  
فَرَغْتَ فَأَنْصَبْ ⑧ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ⑨

Did We not expand your breast for you, and relieve you of your burden, that which weighed down your back? Did We not exalt your mention? For truly with hardship comes ease. Truly with hardship comes ease. So when you are finished, toil and seek your Lord.

*Solace, 1-9*

© FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com



# GLOSSARY OF ISLAMIC TERMS

**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, “The People of the Prophetic Practice and Community”; refers to Sunni Muslims as a community.

**Al-Fatihah:** Literally, “The Opening” or “The Beginning”. This is the title of the first chapter of the Qur’an that is recited as a fundamental part of Muslims’ daily prayers.

**Aqidah:** Creed. This refers to theological and doctrinal beliefs of Muslims.

**Ash’ari:** 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).

**Adhan/Azaan:** The call to prayer.

**Bid’ah:** Literally, “innovation”; this refers to the act of introducing superfluous, or non-prescribed traditions into Islamic practice. It is used in common speech as a denunciation toward those not acting in accordance with the prescriptions of Islam.

**Caliph:** From the Arabic word *khalifah* (“successor”), the head of the entire community of Muslims, either current or in the past. Is also used by certain sects and Sufi *tariqahs* to refer to their own leader or his successor.

**Chador:** A loose cloth traditionally worn by Muslim women usually covering the body from head to foot.

**Da’i/Da’ee:** Islamic missionary.

**Dawah:** Islamic missionary work; literally “inviting” to Islam” or to acts of Islamic virtue.

**Emir (or Amir):** A title accorded to a leader, prince, or commander-in-chief.

**Fatwah:** 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 its time, place, people, and

other details. Unlike the ruling of a judge (*qadi*), it is not normally binding.

**Fiqh:** Islamic jurisprudence. A branch of the shariah that deals with rulings related to human actions, as opposed to faith or spirituality.

**Fiqh Al-Aqaliyyat:** Islamic rulings for Muslims living as minorities in predominantly non-Muslim lands.

**Ghazal:** Love poetry used for describing the beauty of the loved one as well as the emotions the poet has towards the beloved.

**Hadith:** Literally, “saying”. These are a collection of sayings—or direct observations—of the Prophet Muhammad. There are numerous *ahadeeth* (plural of “hadith”), and the practice of verifying them is a particular Islamic scholarly practice that has been carried out since the life of the Prophet.

**Hafiz (or Hafizah) 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 and, until today, the authenticity of Qur’anic transmission is based primarily on oral, then written, transmission.

**Haji:** The pilgrimage to Makkah, one of the five pillars of Islam. It is a once-in-a-lifetime obligation upon every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it. The pilgrimage occurs from the 8th-12th days 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:** In the context of a sacred precinct, like Makkah, Medinah, or Al-Aqsa, this term means “inviolable”. In most contexts, this term means “forbidden”, and relates to actions that are impermissible according to Islamic law.

**Hijab:** Normally refers to the headscarf worn by Muslim women but refers to both the head cover and attire worn by Muslim women to preserve their modesty. It is obligatory by the consensus of all classical

Islamic schools of thought. In some contexts, it can mean segregation, as in between genders.

**Hijaz:** The region along the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula that separates Najd in the east from Tuhamah in the west.

**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 the Prophet Muhammad and is currently practiced by the majority of Oman's Muslim population. It is also found across parts of Africa.

**Ihsan:** Virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of, God.

**Ijaza:** 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, thereby enabling the student to transmit the knowledge gained from the teacher. This is performed under the supervision of a certified sheikh whose chain of narrations often leads to the Prophet Muhammad.

**Ijtihad:** Independent reasoning, or individual interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

**Imam:** (1) In both Sunni and Shia Islam an imam is the leader of congregational prayers who may also deliver the sermon of the Friday (Jumu'ah) prayers; more generally, a person of authority within the community. (2) In Shia 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 Shia Islam, that comprises a series of divinely guided imams.

**Iman:** Faith in God.

**Islam:** Submission to God's will.

**Isnad:** The chain of narrators of the Hadith; it is the list of authorities who have transmitted the sayings, actions or approbations of the Prophet Muhammad via one of his Companions or a later authority (*tabi'i*). The reliability of the *isnad* is the main criteria in the validity of Hadith. Modern

practices of scientific citation and historical method owe a great deal to the rigour 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 jihad is to overcome one's ego and lower self. It is considered a religious duty upon every Muslim.

**Kaaba:** The large cubic structure in the Grand Mosque in Makkah, 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 Arabic calligraphy, which is the artistic practice of handwriting Arabic phrases, often in the form of verses of the Qur'an or Islamic supplications..

**Khateeb:** Refers to the person who delivers the sermon (khutbah) during certain occasions such as the Friday or Eid prayers. He is usually the imam or leader of the prayer.

**Khalifah:** See "caliph".

**Khanqah:** A building designed specifically for gatherings of a Sufi brotherhood, or *tariqah*, and is a place for spiritual retreat and character reformation. It is also synonymous with the regional terms *ribat*, *tekke*, and *zawiyyah*.

**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, "one-fifth" in Arabic; a religious tax of one-fifth of one's income owed by followers of *Usuli* Twelver Shia to a very senior cleric and poor Muslims.

**Madhhab:** A traditional school of Islamic legal methodology (e. g. Hanbali, Maliki, Shafi, Hanafi, Ja'fari).

**Madrasah:** The Arabic word for "school". Can refer to a religious school.

**Majlis al-Shurah:** Consultative religio-legislative body.

**Marja’/Marja’iyyah:** The highest position of authority in the *Usuli* school of Twelver Shia *fiqh* whose authority lies after the Qur’an, prophets, and imams. Also referred to as *marja’ taqlid* (literally, “one who is worthy of being imitated”); they have the authority to make legal decisions within the confines of Islamic law for laymen and less-qualified clerics.

**Masjid:** Arabic for “mosque”.

**Maturidi:** 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, “(female) 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:** Someone qualified to teach others correct recitation of the Qur’an.

**Murid:** Disciple of a Sufi guide or order.

**Mursyidul Am:** Malaysian term for religious guide.

**Mushaf:** A printing of the Qur’an, referring to the physical bound volume of the Holy Book.

**Mutabarrik:** Supporter or affiliate of a Sufi guide or order, someone less serious in treading the spiritual path than a *murid*.

**Mu’tazili:** An almost obsolete school of Sunni Islam, popular in the 8th century, that advocates the belief that the Qur’an is created—as opposed to the Orthodox Sunni view that it is eternal and uncreated.

**Nasheed:** Islamic song. Islamic vocal music, sung individually or by a group and sometimes accom-

panied by the *daf*, a shallow drum similar to the tambourine. 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.

**Qiblah:** The direction in which Muslims offer their five daily prayers; the direction of the Kaaba in Makkah.

**Ramadan:** Holy month of fasting, 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

**Salafi:** A movement of Sunni Muslims that places great emphasis on the literal interpretation of the Qur’an and Hadith, with scepticism towards the role of the human intellect.

**Salawat:** Prayers of peace upon the Prophet which have many distinct formulas, often consisting of the basic *Allahumma salli ala sayyidina Muhammad wa ala Aalihi wa sallim* (O God, send your prayers and blessings 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.

**Shariah:** 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 or tribal official.

**Shia:** The second largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *shiatu ‘Ali* or “party of Ali”, the fourth caliph of Islam and first imam in Shia Islam.



**Sunnah:** 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 al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah or “The 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.

**Taqlid:** The practice of following rulings without questioning religious authority. This is a core tenet of the Shia *Usuli* school of Islamic law.

**Tariqah:** any particular brotherhood of Sufism (spiritual travel) 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 rites than the Hajj.

**Usul Al-Din:** The basic foundations of the Islamic religion, represent creed, behaviour, 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 Jurist”, 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:** Mandatory distribution of excess wealth to the poor, and one of the five pillars of Islam. It typically consists of distributing 2.5% (one fortieth) of one’s excess wealth every year, as well as mandatory charity during Eid Al-Fitr, following Ramadan.

**Zawiya:** See khanqah, above.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝  
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۚ

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۚ

مَلِكُ النَّاسِ ۚ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ۚ  
مَرْشِدُ الْغَوَّاسِ ۚ الْغَاسِقِ  
الَّذِي يُوسِّسُ فِي صَدْرِكَ  
النُّجُومَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ

مَرْشِدُ مَا خَلَقَ ۚ وَفَتْحَ  
بَابَهُ إِذَا وَقَبَ ۚ وَفَتْحَ  
بَابَ الْفَقَائَاتِ فِي الْعَقْلِ  
وَمَرْشِدُ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا خَبَرَ

# THE INDICES

# INDEX BY NAME

## A

Abbas, HE President Mahmoud 105  
 Abdalla, Asma Mohamed 126  
 Abdel Haleem, Professor Muhammad 119  
 Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar 139  
 Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba 151  
 Abdulkodirzoda, Mufti Saidmukarram 136  
 HRH Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah 125  
 HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah 146  
 Abdulmajid, Iman 173  
 Abdurrahman, Professor Dr Taha 115  
 Abdur-Razak, Shaykh Faisal Hamid (new) 137  
 Aboubakary, Maiga 151  
 Aboulela, Leila 172  
 Aboutaleb, Ahmed 130  
 Aboutrika, Mohamed 185  
 HRE Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan  
     Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III 75  
 Abuelaish, Dr Izzeldin 149  
 Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal 160  
 Abu Rashta, Ata 125  
 Abu Sarah, Aziz 149  
 AbuSulayman, Muna 146  
 Abu Sway, Professor Mustafa 102  
 Achar, Miftahul 135  
 Adam, Fawzia Yusuf Haji 127  
 Aden, Halima 177  
 Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid 179  
 Afifa, Dr Nadhira Nuraini 166  
 Ahmad, Abdrahman Olanrewaju 133  
 Ahmad, Sheikh Abubakr 134  
 Ahmed, Professor Akbar 104  
 Ahmed, Riz 176  
 Al-Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmad Ali 179  
 Akhundzada, HE Mullah Haibatullah 100  
 Al-Akiti, Dato Dr Muhammad Afifi 117  
 Alabbar, Mohamed Ben Ali 161  
 Alattas, Syed Hassan bin Muhammad bin Salim 142  
 Alidoosti, Taraneh 171  
 Aliyev, HE President Ilham 92  
 Aljunied, Professor Khairudin (new) 118  
 Al-Khoei, Sayyed Jawad 146  
 Allam, Sheikh Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim 132  
 Alsuleiman, Imam Shady 137  
 Altwaijri, Dr Abdulaziz Othman 132  
 Al-Ameri, Khalid 150  
 Amin, Maruf 135  
 Amoli, HE Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi 104  
 Al-Amoudi, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali 161

Ansari, Anousheh 160  
 Anwar, Zainah 155  
 Al-Arifi, Dr Muhammad 107  
 Ashafa, Imam Muhammad 153  
 Aslam, Syima (new) 177  
 Al-Assad, HE President Bashar 126  
 Assaf, Mohammed 185  
 Assaf, Roger 171  
 Al-Aswany, Alaa 170  
 Al-Attas, Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib 101  
 Professor Atta-Ur-Rahman 167  
 Aung, Khalifa U Thein Win (new) 142  
 Al-Awadhi, Najla 182  
 Awad, Nihad 158  
 Awang, Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin 141  
 Al-Awni, Dr Hatim 115  
 Al-Azhari, Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid 92  
 Aziz, Asif 163  
 Azmi, Hazrat Allama Maulana Qamaruzzaman 140  
 Azmi, Shabana 174

## B

Babikir, Sheikh Ahmed 143  
 Badawi, Samar 150  
 Badie, Dr Mohammed 132  
 Badreya, Sayed 170  
 Bagir, Haidar 147  
 Al-Bahar, Shaikha 160  
 Bakar, Professor Osman 118  
 El-Banna, Dr Hany 148  
 Bano, Bilkis 154  
 Baradar, Abdul Ghani 127  
 Barakat, Maha 150  
 Al-Barghouti, Dr Tamim 171  
 Barzani, Masoud 123  
 Bauch, Sheikh Tahir Usman 140  
 Bayero, Aminu Ado 106  
 bin Bayyah, HE Sheikh Abdullah 77  
 El-Baz, Farouk 165  
 Bazoum, HE President Mohamed 126  
 Bechari, Dr Mohammed 106  
 Belkaid, Sheikh Abdellatif 139  
 Benganna, Khadija 181  
 Bensouda, Fatou 151  
 Benzema, Karim 186  
 Bewley, Aisha 122  
 Beydoun, Khaled 158  
 Bhikha, Zain 173  
 Bin Laden, Bakr 161  
 Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa 117



Bouhia, Dr Hynd 160  
 Bukai, Sheikh Mohamad 138  
 Bukhari, Khanum Tayyaba 142  
 Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibraheemul Khaleel 134  
 Al-Bukhary, Syed Mokhtar 147

## C

Carson, André 131  
 Çelebi, Master Hasan 176  
 Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa 118  
 Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala 153  
 Chappelle, David Khari Webber 177  
 Cherif, Mustapha 113  
 Chimaev, Khamzat (new) 186  
 Chowdhury, Sheikh Tawfique 158  
 Cisse, Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali 90

## D

Dabashi, Professor Hamid 113  
 Dahlan, Professor Dr Winai 167  
 Dajani, Professor Rana 165  
 Damad, Ayatollah Dr Seyyed Mostafa  
     Mohaghegh 113  
 Dangote, Alhaji Aliko 162  
 Davutoğlu, Ahmet 130  
 Dayib, Faduma 153  
 Dayrit, Flordeliza 158  
 Dudić, Grand Mufti Mevljud (new) 137  
 Duzyatan, Engin Altan 176

## E

Ebadi, Shirin 149  
 Ebtekar, Dr Masoumeh 123  
 Elgamal, Dr Taher 168  
 Ellison, Keith 131  
 Elmi, Asha Haji 153  
 Erdoğan, HE President Recep Tayyip 53  
 El-Erian, Mohamed 164  
 Esack, Farid 116  
 Al-Esa, Majed 172

## F

Faizal, Mohamed 148  
 Faming, Hassan Yang 134  
 Al-Faqih, Judge Kholoud 149  
 Farah, Mohamed 186  
 Al-Fares, Ola 181  
 Farhadi, Asghar 171  
 Farooq, Dr Mohammad Umar 127  
 Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Salih Bin Fawzan 115  
 Fayadh, HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq 104

## G

Gaynutdin, Mufti Sheikh Ravil 119  
 Gelenbe, Dr Erol 168  
 Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad ibn Said 179  
 Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad 142

Ghannouchi, Sheikh Rached 97  
 Ghilan, Dr Mohamed 168  
 Al-Ghunaim, Maha 160  
 Gomaa, HE Sheikh Dr Ali 83  
 Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno Abd al Haqq 167  
 Gülen, Fethullah 142  
 Al Gurg, Raja 162  
 Gurnah, Abdulrazak 173  
 Gutoc-Tomawis, Samira 129  
 Gymnastiar, Abdullah Aa Gym 141

## H

Hadzhi, Mufti Mustafa Alish 136  
 Hafiz, Asim (new) 157  
 bin Hafiz, HE Sheikh Al-Habib Umar 39  
 Haftar, Khalifa 125  
 Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf 138  
 Hamidun, Hafiz 175  
 Hamid, Zaid 183  
 Hammadeh, Sheikh Jihad 145  
 Haniyeh, HE Ismail 69  
 Hanson, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf 89  
 Haqqani, Sheikh Mehmet Adil 142  
 Ul-Haq, Siraj 135  
 Hasan, Dr Hashima 166  
 Hasan, Mehdi 184  
 Hasballah, Muzammil 179  
 Hashmi, Dr Farhat 118  
 Al-Hassani, Dr Salim 168  
 Ul-Hassan, Maulana Zuhair 135  
 Hassan, HE President Samia Suluhu 95  
 Al-Hathloul, Loujain 107  
 Hayward, Professor Joel 120  
 Helal, Lobna 160  
 Hellyer, Dr Hisham 120  
 Henry, Aisha Gray 177  
 Hoja, Gulchehra 183  
 Hosein, Sheikh Imran 144  
 Hosny, Sheikh Mustafa 90  
 Hossain, Dr Hameeda 154  
 Hosseini, Khaled 173  
 Al-Houthi, Sheikh Abdul-Malik 96  
 Howeid, Dr Fahmy 181  
 Al-Hroub, Hanan 149  
 Husain, Mishal 184  
 Husic, Ed 131  
 Al-Hussaini, HE Ibrahim Saleh 99  
 Hussain, Nadiya 186  
 Al-Hussayni, Shah Karim 93  
 HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein 47  
 Hussein, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad 132

## I

Ibrahim, HE Prime Minister Anwar 73

Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed "Mo" 161  
 Ibrahim, Sheikh Mustapha 151  
 Al-Ibrahim, Waleed bin Ibrahim 182  
 Idris, Hajji Omar 116  
 İmamoğlu, Dr Ataç 168  
 Indrawati, Sri Mulyani 162  
 Iqbal, Salman 183  
 Islam, Yusuf 177  
 Ismail, Dr Edna Adan (new) 153  
 Ismail, Jezima 156  
 Ismail, Al-Hajj Siddiq 175  
 Ismail, Sufyan 148  
 Al-Issa, Dr Mohammad ben Abdel Karim 133  
 Issa, Mohsin and Issa, Zuber (new) 164  
 Izzuddin, Dr Mustafa (new) 156

## J

Al-Jaber, Fatima 162  
 Jabeur, Ons 185  
 Jackson, Dr Sherman 122  
 Jafari, Major General Mohammad Ali 123  
 Jah, Ambassador Professor Dr Omar 116  
 Jameel, Maulana Tariq 94  
 Al-Jifri, Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al-Abideen 85  
 Joya, Malalai 154  
 Al-Julani, Abu Muhammad 188

## K

Al-Kaabi, Noura 183  
 Kabbani, Sheikh Muhammad Hisham 144  
 Kadeer, Rebiya 127  
 Kadyrov, HE President Ramzan 130  
 Kalin, Dr Ibrahim 87  
 Kamali, Professor Mohammad Hashim 118  
 Kandhalvi, Maulana Saad 134  
 Kane, Zeinaba 153  
 Karaman, Professor Dr Hayrettin 119  
 Karam, Dr Azza 149  
 Kareem, Abdul-Jabbar 187  
 Karic, Dr Enes 119  
 Karman, Tawakkol 151  
 Katsina, Sheikh Yakubu Musa 140  
 Kavazovic, Husein 136  
 Keita, Salif 172  
 Keller, Sheikh Nuh 107  
 Khademhosseini, Professor Ali 165  
 Al-Khairi, Sheikh Abdul-Nacer 139  
 Khaled, Dr Amr 101  
 Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed 133  
 Al-Khalili, Sheikh Ahmad 115  
 Khamenei, HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali 43  
 Khan, Aamir 174  
 Khanfar, Wadah 182  
 Khan, HE Imran 106

Khan, Dr Mehmood 169  
 Khan, Sadiq 106  
 Khan, Salman 158  
 Khan, Dr Saniyasnain 155  
 Khan, Shahid 164  
 Khasawneh, Sheikh Abdul Karim 114  
 Köhler, Ayyub Axel 137  
 Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmed 139  
 Kudaibergen, Dimash 175  
 Al-Kurdi, Raad Muhammad Abd al-Rahman  
     Salih 179  
 El-Kurd, Mohammed, El-Kurd Muna 182  
 Kutty, Faisal 158

## L

Lalami, Laila 171  
 Lame, Khaby 186

## M

Al-Madani, Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali 146  
 Madani, Maulana Syed Arshad 141  
 Madani, Maulana Mahmood 71  
 Al-Madkhali, Sheikh Rabee ibn Haadi 'Umayr 115  
 Magid, Imam Mohammed 159  
 Mahmutćehajić, Professor Dr Rusmir 119  
 Majidi, Majid 171  
 HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid  
     Al-Maktoum 126  
 Al-Malik, Dr Salim M 133  
 Mamdani, Professor Mahmood 117  
 Mane, Sadio 109  
 Mangera, Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf 120  
 Mansour, Ahmed 181  
 Maqari, Sheikh Professor Ibrahim Ahmad 140  
 Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad 188  
 Marsoof, Justice Dr Saleem 157  
 Mashal, Khaled 125  
 Masoud, Moez 139  
 Mattar, Dr Maryam 151  
 Mattson, Dr Ingrid 105  
 Mazari, Muniba 155  
 Mbacke, Serigne Mountakha 134  
 Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa 140  
 Metso, Mufti Djemali 142  
 Mindaoudou, Dodo Aichatou 153  
 Mirziyoyev, HE President Shavkat 129  
 HH Sheikhha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned 146  
 Misuari, Nur 129  
 Mogahed, Dalia 159  
 Mohamad, Goenawan 183  
 Mohamad, HE Mahathir 128  
 Mohammed II, Warithudeen 138  
 HM King Mohammed VI 59  
 Mohseni, Saad 183

Mohyeldin, Ayman 184  
 Moosa, Professor Ebrahim 116  
 Mosteghanemi, Ahlam 170  
 El Mouhandiz, Rajae 176  
 MrGhani, Sheikh Dr Mahmoud 141  
 Al-Mueaqly, Sheikh Maher bin Hamad 179  
 Al-Muftah, Ghanim (new) 150  
 Muftić, Elmedina 157  
 Mufti, MIM Rizwe 136  
 Mumpuni, Tri 166  
 Munir, General Syed Asim (new) 128  
 Al-Mutawa, Dr Naif 181

## N

Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed Ratib 115  
 Naci, Elvis 142  
 Nadia, Asma 174  
 Nadim, Nadia 185  
 Nadwi, Dr Bahauddeen Muhammed  
 Jamaluddeen 117  
 Nadwi, Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram 120  
 El-Naggar, Dr Zaghloul 165  
 HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed  
 Al-Nahyan 51  
 Naik, Zakir Abdul Karim 107  
 Al-Najafi, Grand Ayatollah Bashir 113  
 Nakshawani, Ammar 143  
 Al-Namankany, Dr Abeer 165  
 Namira, Hamza (new) 170  
 Naqvi, Ayatollah Sayed Sajid Ali 135  
 Nashir, Dr KH Haedar 135  
 Nasibullahoglu, Cafer 137  
 Nasrallah, Seyyed Hassan 91  
 Nasr, Professor Seyyed Hossein 95  
 Nayed, Dr Aref Ali 104  
 Nazeri, Shahram 171  
 N'Dour, Youssou 172  
 Al-Ninowy, Sheikh Dr Muhammad bin Yahya 144  
 Nkunduwiga, Haruna 151  
 Nomani, Mufti Abul Qasim 106  
 Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang) 174  
 Noorie, Maulana Shakir Ali 134  
 Nurhaliza, Dato' Siti 175  
 Nurmagomedov, Khabib 109  
 Nusseibeh, Professor Sari 115

## O

Obaid-Chinoy, Sharmeen 175  
 Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed 150  
 Olayan, Lubna 161  
 Oloyede, Professor Ishaq Olanrewaju 133  
 Omar, Ilhan 131  
 Omer, Mohammed 182  
 Omran, Lojain 182

Osmani-Sadriu, President Vjosa 129  
 Al-Othaimeen, Dr Yousef Ahmad 133  
 Al-Ouda, Sheikh Salman 61  
 Owaisi, MP Janab Asaduddin 134  
 Oz, Dr Mehmet 184

## P

Pallavicini, Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe 137  
 Pamuk, Orhan 176  
 Parawansa, Khofifah Indar 127  
 Parveen, Abida 175  
 Parvez, Khurram (new) 155  
 Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur  
 Hummat 117  
 Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal 143  
 Pirzada, Shaykh Muhammad Imdad Hussain 120  
 Premji, Azim 147

## Q

Qabbani, Dr Mohammad Rashid 114  
 Qadhi, Dr Yasir 122  
 Qadiri, Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar 100  
 Qadri, Muhammad Owais Raza 175  
 Al-Qadri, Sheikh Dr Tahir 118  
 Al-Qaradaghi, Professor Ali Mohyi Al 114  
 Al-Qarni, Dr Aaidh 139  
 Qasimov, Alim 173  
 Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal 147  
 Al-Qassimi, Sheikh Lubna 126  
 HH Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed  
 Al-Qassimi 147  
 Qureshi, Khawar 157

## R

Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz 143  
 Rahman, Allah Rakha 174  
 Rahman, Maulana Nazur 98  
 Raisi, President Ebrahim 123  
 Ramadan, Dr Tariq 119  
 Ramzan, Dr Mubeena 155  
 Randeree, Shabir 164  
 Rashad, Professor Ali Akbar 132  
 Rasheed, Zainul Abidin 129  
 Rasul-Bernardo, Amina 156  
 Rasul, Santanina Tillah 156  
 Rizvi, Professor Dr Adibul Hasan 148  
 Rosa, Helvy Tiana 174  
 Al-Rostamani, Hana 162  
 Al-Ruwaini, Nashwa 182

## S

HH Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah 125  
 Sabanci, Güler 163  
 Sabri, Sheikh Dr Ekrima Sa'id 132  
 Sabur, M Abdus 157

Al-Sadr, Ayatollah Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail 114  
 Sadr, Sheikh Muqtada 98  
 Al-Sadr, Rabab 146  
 Saeed, Dr Mohamed Shaheem Ali 135  
 Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa 115  
 Sahin, Dr Uğur 108  
 Said, Sheikh Faïd Mohammed 116  
 Saïed, HE President Kais 126  
 Saïfuddin, Syedna Mufaddal 141  
 Saïf, Dr Umar 167  
 Salah, Mohamed 97  
 Salah, Sheikh Raed 123  
 Samar, Dr Sima 154  
 Sancar, Dr Aziz 168  
 Sanders, Peter 177  
 Sanusi, Alhaji Dr Sanusi Lamido 133  
 Sardar, Ziauddin 120  
 Sarsour, Linda 159  
 HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal Al-Saud 161  
 HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud 63  
 HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud 41  
 Sayeed, Aryana 173  
 Shah, Naseem 130  
 Shah, Ryhaan 178  
 Shakil-ur-Rahman, Mir 183  
 Shakir, Imam Zaid 144  
 Al-Shanqiti, Muhammad Al-Hasan bin Al-Diddu 116  
 Sharif, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz 128  
 Sharif, Nawaz 129  
 Sharubutu, Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu 140  
 Al-Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr 179  
 Al-Sheikh, Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal 91  
 Shihab, Quraish 141  
 Shirazi, Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim 113  
 Shokrollahi, Professor M Amin 165  
 Al-Shugairi, Ahmad 139  
 Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar 166  
 Al-Shuraim, Sheikh Saud ibn Ibrahim bin Muhammad 179  
 Siddiqi, Irfan 167  
 Siddique, Professor Teepu 169  
 Siddiqui, Mohammadi 155  
 Sindi, Dr Hayat 166  
 Siradj, Professor KH Said Aqil 155  
 El-Sisi, HE President Abdel Fattah Saeed 81  
 Al-Sistani, HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein 57  
 Sobhani, Ayatollah Jafar 113  
 Sobhi, Islam 179

Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail 147  
 Soufi, Nawal 149  
 Souleymane, Mahamadou 172  
 Yahya Cholil Staquf 79  
 Subianto, Lt Gen Prabowo 128  
 Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul-Rahman 108  
 Al-Sudani, HE Mohammed Shayya (new) 105  
 Al-Suhaimi, Sarah 161  
 Sukarnoputri, Megawati 128  
 Suleiman, Imam Omar 144  
 Sulis 175  
 Sultana, Razia 154  
 Suquillo, Professor Juan 138  
 Suwaidan, Sheikh Dr Tareq 181  
 Syamsuddin, Professor M Din 104

## T

Taha, HE Sheikh Uthman 96  
 Tamimi, Ahed 107  
 Al-Tamimi, Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab 115  
 HRH Sultan Haitham bin Tariq 125  
 Tate, Andrew (new) 186  
 Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad 132  
 Al-Tayyeb, HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad 67  
 Ternava, Sheikh Naim 137  
 Al-Thani, Dr Abdulla bin Ali 150  
 HH Sheikhha Aisha bint Faleh bin Nasser Al-Thani 150  
 HH Sheikhha Al-Mayassa Al-Thani 172  
 HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani 45  
 Thohir, Erick 162  
 Tinubu, HE President Chief Bola Ahmed (new) 126  
 Tlaib, Rashida 131  
 Tohti, Ilham 154  
 Tokayev, HE President Kassym-Jomart 128  
 Topbaş, Osman Nuri 143  
 Tyson, Mike (Malik Abdul Aziz) 187  
 Tzortzis, Hamza (new) 143

## U

Ulfah, Hajjah Maria 180  
 Ulukaya, Hamdi 163  
 Umar, Ahmad 188  
 Usmani, HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi 55

## W

HM Sultan Hajji Hassanah Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah 162  
 Wahhaj, Imam Siraj 144  
 Waked, Amr 170  
 El-Wakil, Abdel-Wahed 170  
 Wan Ismail, Datuk Seri Wan Azizah 128  
 Warsi, Baroness Sayeeda 130  
 Wazed, HE Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina 105



Wharnsby, Dawud *177*  
 Widodo, HE President Joko *65*  
 Williams, Paul (new) *157*  
 Williams, Sonny *187*  
 Wilson, Willow *178*  
 Winter, Dr Timothy (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim  
 Winter) *99*

## Y

Yacob, HE Halimah *156*  
 Yahya, Al-Habib Muhammad Luthfi bin *93*  
 Yalçin, Rabia *176*  
 Al-Yaqoubi, Sheikh Muhammad *94*  
 Yaquby, Nizam *113*  
 Ying, Professor Jackie *169*

Yousaf, Humza (new) *130*  
 Yousafzai, Malala *108*  
 Youssef, Ramy *178*  
 Yunus, Mohammad *154*  
 Yusuf, Vivvy *185*  
 Yusuf, Sami *108*

## Z

Zain, Maher *176*  
 Zakaria, Fareed *184*  
 Zakariya, Mohamed *178*  
 Zakzaky, Sheikh Ibraheem *116*  
 Al-Zayani, Afnan *160*  
 Zidane, Zinedine *186*  
 Al-Zindani, Sheikh Abdul Majeed *140*

# INDEX BY COUNTRY

## AFGHANISTAN

Akhundzada, HE Mullah Haibatullah *100*  
 Baradar, Abdul Ghani *127*  
 Hosseini, Khaled *173*  
 Joya, Malalai *154*  
 Mohseni, Saad *183*  
 Samar, Dr Sima *154*  
 Sayeed, Aryana *173*

## ALBANIA

Naci, Elvis *142*

## ALGERIA

Belkaid, Sheikh Abdellatif *139*  
 Benganna, Khadija *181*  
 Cherif, Mustapha *113*  
 Al-Khairi, Sheikh Abdul-Nacer *139*  
 Mosteghanemi, Ahlam *170*

## ARGENTINA

Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf *138*

## AUSTRALIA

Alsuleiman, Imam Shady *137*  
 Chowdhury, Sheikh Tawfique *158*  
 Husic, Ed *131*

## AZERBAIJAN

Aliyev, HE President Ilham *92*  
 Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur  
 Hummat *117*  
 Qasimov, Alim *173*

## BAHRAIN

Yaquby, Nizam *113*  
 Al-Zayani, Afnan *160*

## BANGLADESH

Hossain, Dr Hameeda *154*  
 Sultana, Razia *154*  
 Wazed, HE Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina *105*

Yunus, Mohammad *154*

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa *118*  
 Karic, Dr Enes *119*  
 Kavazovic, Husein *136*  
 Mahmutćehajić, Professor Dr Rusmir *119*  
 Muftić, Elmedina *157*

## BRAZIL

Bukai, Sheikh Mohamad *138*  
 Hammadeh, Sheikh Jihad *145*

## BRUNEI

HM Sultan Hajji Hassanah Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin  
 Waddaulah *162*

## BULGARIA

Hadzhi, Mufti Mustafa Alish *136*

## BURKINA FASO

Aboubakary, Maiga *151*

## BURUNDI

Nkunduwigwa, Haruna *151*

## CANADA

Abdur-Razak, Shaykh Faisal Hamid (new) *137*  
 Dayrit, Flordeliza *158*  
 Ghilan, Dr Mohamed *168*  
 Kutty, Faisal *158*  
 Mattson, Dr Ingrid *105*  
 Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal *143*  
 Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz *143*  
 Wharnsby, Dawud *177*

## CHINA

Faming, Hassan Yang *134*  
 Hoja, Gulchehra *183*  
 Kadeer, Rebiya *127*  
 Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang) *174*  
 Tohti, Ilham *154*

## **COTE D'IVOIRE**

Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba *151*

## **DENMARK**

Nadim, Nadia *185*

## **ECUADOR**

Suquillo, Professor Juan *138*

## **EGYPT**

Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar *139*

Aboutrika, Mohamed *185*

Allam, Sheikh Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim *132*

Al-Aswany, Alaa *170*

Al-Azhari, Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid *92*

Badie, Dr Mohammed *132*

Badreya, Sayed *170*

El-Baz, Farouk *165*

Gomaa, HE Sheikh Dr Ali *83*

Helal, Lobna *160*

Hosny, Sheikh Mustafa *90*

Howeidy, Dr Fahmy *181*

Karam, Dr Azza *149*

Khaled, Dr Amr *101*

Mansour, Ahmed *181*

Masoud, Moez *139*

El-Naggar, Dr Zaghoul *165*

Namira, Hamza (new) *170*

Salah, Mohamed *97*

El-Sisi, HE President Abdel Fattah Saeed *81*

Sobhi, Islam *179*

Al-Tayyeb, HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad *67*

Waked, Amr *170*

El-Wakil, Abdel-Wahed *170*

## **ERITREA**

Said, Sheikh Faid Mohammed *116*

## **ETHIOPIA**

Idris, Hajji Omar *116*

## **FRANCE**

Bechari, Dr Mohammed *106*

Benzema, Karim *186*

Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno Abd al Haqq *167*

Al-Hussayni, Shah Karim *93*

Zidane, Zinedine *186*

## **THE GAMBIA**

Bensouda, Fatou *151*

Jah, Ambassador Professor Dr Omar *116*

## **GERMANY**

Köhler, Ayyub Axel *137*

## **GHANA**

Ibrahim, Sheikh Mustapha *151*

Sharubutu, Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu *140*

## **GREECE**

Metso, Mufti Djemali *142*

## **GUYANA**

Shah, Ryhaan *178*

## **INDIA**

Ahmad, Sheikh Abubakr *134*

Azmi, Hazrat Allama Maulana Qamaruzzaman *140*

Azmi, Shabana *174*

Bano, Bilkis *154*

Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibraheemul Khaleel *134*

Farooq, Dr Mohammad Umar *127*

Hasan, Dr Hashima *166*

Ul-Hassan, Maulana Zuhair *135*

Kandhalvi, Maulana Saad *134*

Khan, Aamir *174*

Khan, Dr Saniyasnain *155*

Madani, Maulana Syed Arshad *141*

Madani, Maulana Mahmood *71*

Nadwi, Dr Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen  
*117*

Naik, Zakir Abdul Karim *107*

Nomani, Mufti Abul Qasim *106*

Noorie, Maulana Shakir Ali *134*

Owaisi, MP Janab Asaduddin *134*

Parvez, Khurram (new) *155*

Premji, Azim *147*

Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal *147*

Rahman, Allah Rakha *174*

Ramzan, Dr Mubeena *155*

Saifuddin, Syedna Mufaddal *141*

## **INDONESIA**

Achar, Miftahul *135*

Afifa, Dr Nadhira Nuraini *166*

Amin, Maruf *135*

Bagir, Haidar *147*

Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa *117*

Gymnastiar, Abdullah Aa Gym *141*

Hasballah, Muzammil *179*

Indrawati, Sri Mulyani *162*

Mohamad, Goenawan *183*

Mumpuni, Tri *166*

Nadia, Asma *174*

Nashir, Dr KH Haedar *135*

Parawansa, Khofifah Indar *127*

Rosa, Helvy Tiana *174*

Shihab, Quraish *141*

Siradj, Professor KH Said Aqil *155*

Yahya Cholil Staquf *79*

Subianto, Lt Gen Prabowo *128*

Sukarnoputri, Megawati *128*

Sulis *175*

Syamsuddin, Professor M Din *104*

Thohir, Erick *162*

Ulfah, Hajjah Maria *180*

Widodo, HE President Joko 65  
Yahya, Al-Habib Muhammad Luthfi bin 93

### **IRAN**

Alidoosti, Taraneh 171  
Amoli, HE Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi 104  
Ansari, Anousheh 160  
Dabashi, Professor Hamid 113  
Damad, Ayatollah Dr Seyyed Mostafa Mohaghegh 113  
Ebadi, Shirin 149  
Ebtekar, Dr Masoumeh 123  
Farhadi, Asghar 171  
Jafari, Major General Mohammad Ali 123  
Khademhosseini, Professor Ali 165  
Khamenei, HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali 43  
Majidi, Majid 171  
Nazeri, Shahram 171  
Raisi, President Ebrahim 123  
Rashad, Professor Ali Akbar 132  
Shirazi, Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim 113  
Shokrollahi, Professor M Amin 165  
Sobhani, Ayatollah Jafar 113

### **IRAQ**

Al-Khoei, Sayyed Jawad 146  
Barzani, Masoud 123  
Fayadh, HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq 104  
Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmed 139  
Al-Kurdi, Raad Muhammad Abd al-Rahman Salih 179  
Al-Najafi, Grand Ayatollah Bashir 113  
Al-Qaradaghi, Professor Ali Mohyi Al 114  
Al-Sadr, Ayatollah Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail 114  
Sadr, Sheikh Muqtada 98  
Al-Sistani, HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein 57  
Al-Sudani, HE Mohammed Shayya (new) 105

### **ISRAEL**

Salah, Sheikh Raed 123

### **ITALY**

Lame, Khaby 186  
Pallavicini, Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe 137

### **JORDAN**

HRH Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah 125  
HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah 146  
Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal 160  
Abu Rashta, Ata 125  
Dajani, Professor Rana 165  
Al-Fares, Ola 181  
HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein 47  
Keller, Sheikh Nuh 107  
Khasawneh, Sheikh Abdul Karim 114

Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad 188

### **KAZAKHSTAN**

Kudaibergen, Dimash 175  
Tokayev, HE President Kassym-Jomart 128

### **KENYA**

Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed 133

### **KOSOVO**

Osmani-Sadriu, President Vjosa 129  
Ternava, Sheikh Naim 137

### **KUWAIT**

Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid 179  
Al-Bahar, Shaikha 160  
Al-Ghunaim, Maha 160  
Al-Mutawa, Dr Naif 181  
HH Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah 125  
Suwaidan, Sheikh Dr Tareq 181

### **LEBANON**

Assaf, Roger 171  
Nasrallah, Seyyed Hassan 91  
Qabbani, Dr Mohammad Rashid 114  
Al-Sadr, Rabab 146

### **LIBYA**

Haftar, Khalifa 125  
Nayed, Dr Aref Ali 104

### **MALAWI**

Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala 153

### **MALAYSIA**

Al-Akiti, Dato Dr Muhammad Afifi 117  
Anwar, Zainah 155  
Al-Attas, Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib 101  
Awang, Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin 141  
Bakar, Professor Osman 118  
Al-Bukhary, Syed Mokhtar 147  
Hamidun, Hafiz 175  
Ibrahim, HE Prime Minister Anwar 73  
Kamali, Professor Mohammad Hashim 118  
Mohamad, HE Mahathir 128  
MrGlani, Sheikh Dr Mahmoud 141  
Nurhaliza, Dato' Siti 175  
Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar 166  
Wan Ismail, Datuk Seri Wan Azizah 128  
Yusof, Vivvy 185

### **MALDIVES**

Saeed, Dr Mohamed Shaheem Ali 135

### **MALI**

Keita, Salif 172

### **MAURITANIA**

bin Bayyah, HE Sheikh Abdullah 77  
Al-Shanqiti, Muhammad Al-Hasan bin Al-Diddu 116

### **MOROCCO**

Abdurrahman, Professor Dr Taha 115

Bouhia, Dr Hynd 160

Lalami, Laila 171

HM King Mohammed VI 59

Soufi, Nawal 149

Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad 132

### **MYANMAR**

Aung, Khalifa U Thein Win (new) 142

### **NEPAL**

Siddiqui, Mohammadi 155

### **NETHERLANDS**

Aboutaleb, Ahmed 130

El Mouhandiz, Rajae 176

### **NEW ZEALAND**

Hayward, Professor Joel 120

Williams, Sonny 187

### **NIGER**

Bazoum, HE President Mohamed 126

Mindaoudou, Dodo Aichatou 153

Souleymane, Mahamadou 172

### **NIGERIA**

HRE Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan

Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III 75

Ahmad, Abdrahman Olanrewaju 133

Ashafa, Imam Muhammad 153

Bauchi, Sheikh Tahir Usman 140

Bayero, Aminu Ado 106

Dangote, Alhaji Aliko 162

Al-Hussaini, HE Ibrahim Saleh 99

Katsina, Sheikh Yakubu Musa 140

Maqari, Sheikh Professor Ibrahim Ahmad 140

Oloyede, Professor Ishaq Olanrewaju 133

Sanusi, Alhaji Dr Sanusi Lamido 133

Tinubu, HE President Chief Bola Ahmed (new)  
126

Zakzaky, Sheikh Ibraheem 116

### **OMAN**

Al-Khalili, Sheikh Ahmad 115

HRH Sultan Haitham bin Tariq 125

### **PAKISTAN**

Ahmed, Professor Akbar 104

Professor Atta-Ur-Rahman 167

Bukhari, Khanum Tayyaba 142

Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad 142

Hamid, Zaid 183

Ul-Haq, Siraj 135

Hashmi, Dr Farhat 118

Iqbal, Salman 183

Ismail, Al-Hajj Siddiq 175

Jameel, Maulana Tariq 94

Khan, HE Imran 106

Mazari, Muniba 155

Munir, General Syed Asim (new) 128

Naqvi, Ayatollah Sayed Sajid Ali 135

Obaid-Chinoy, Sharmeen 175

Parveen, Abida 175

Qadiri, Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar 100

Qadri, Muhammad Owais Raza 175

Al-Qadri, Sheikh Dr Tahir 118

Rahman, Maulana Nazur 98

Rizvi, Professor Dr Adibul Hasan 148

Saif, Dr Umar 167

Shakil-ur-Rahman, Mir 183

Sharif, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz 128

Sharif, Nawaz 129

Siddiqi, Irfan 167

Usmani, HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi 55

Yousafzai, Malala 108

### **PALESTINE**

Abbas, HE President Mahmoud 105

Abuclaish, Dr Izzeldin 149

Abu Sarah, Aziz 149

Abu Sway, Professor Mustafa 102

Assaf, Mohammed 185

Al-Barghouti, Dr Tamim 171

Al-Faqih, Judge Kholoud 149

Haniyeh, Ismail 69

Al-Hroub, Hanan 149

Hussein, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad 132

Khanfar, Wadah 182

El-Kurd, Mohammed, El-Kurd Muna 182

Mashal, Khaled 125

Nusseibeh, Professor Sari 115

Omer, Mohammed 182

Sabri, Sheikh Dr Ekrima Sa'id 132

Tamimi, Ahed 107

Al-Tamimi, Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab 115

### **PHILIPPINES**

Gutoc-Tomawis, Samira 129

Misuari, Nur 129

Rasul-Bernardo, Amina 156

Rasul, Santanina Tillah 156

### **QATAR**

HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned 146

Al-Muftah, Ghanim (new) 150

Al-Ruwaini, Nashwa 182

Al-Thani, Dr Abdulla bin Ali 150

HH Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh bin Nasser Al-Thani  
150

HH Sheikha Al-Mayassa Al-Thani 172

HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani 45

### **RUSSIA**

Gaynutdin, Mufti Sheikh Ravil 119

Kadyrov, HE President Ramzan 130

Nasibullahoglu, Cafer 137



Nurmagomedov, Khabib 109

## **SAUDI ARABIA**

AbuSulayman, Muna 146

Al-Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmad Ali 179

Altwaijri, Dr Abdulaziz Othman 132

Al-Amoudi, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali 161

Al-Arifi, Dr Muhammad 107

Al-Awni, Dr Hatim 115

Badawi, Samar 150

Bin Laden, Bakr 161

Al-Esa, Majed 172

Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Salih Bin Fawzan 115

Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad ibn Said 179

Al-Hathloul, Loujain 107

Al-Ibrahim, Waleed bin Ibrahim 182

Al-Issa, Dr Mohammed ben Abdel Karim 133

Al-Madani, Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali 146

Al-Madkhali, Sheikh Rabee ibn Haadi 'Umayr 115

Al-Malik, Dr Salim M 133

Al-Mueaqly, Sheikh Maher bin Hamad 179

Al-Namankany, Dr Abeer 165

Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed 150

Olayan, Lubna 161

Omran, Lojain 182

Al-Othaimeen, Dr Yousef Ahmad 133

Al-Ouda, Sheikh Salman 61

Al-Qarni, Dr Aaidh 139

Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa 115

HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal Al-Saud 161

HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin

Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud 63

HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud 41

Al-Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr 179

Al-Sheikh, Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal 91

Al-Shugairi, Ahmad 139

Al-Shuraim, Sheikh Saud ibn Ibrahim ibn

Muhammad 179

Sindi, Dr Hayat 166

Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul-Rahman 108

Al-Suhaimi, Sarah 161

## **SENEGAL**

Cisse, Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali 90

Kane, Zeinaba 153

Mane, Sadio 109

Mbacke, Serigne Mountakha 134

N'Dour, Youssou 172

## **SERBIA**

Dudić, Grand Mufti Mevljud (new) 137

## **SINGAPORE**

Alattas, Syed Hassan bin Muhammad bin Salim 142

Aljunied, Professor Khairudin (new) 118

Faizal, Mohamed 148

Izzuddin, Dr Mustafa (new) 156

Rasheed, Zainul Abidin 129

Yacob, HE Halimah 156

## **SOMALIA**

Abdulmajid, Iman 173

Adam, Fawzia Yusuf Haji 127

Dayib, Faduma 153

Elmi, Asha Haji 153

Ismail, Dr Edna Adan (new) 153

Umar, Ahmad 188

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

Bhikha, Zain 173

Esack, Farid 116

Moosa, Professor Ebrahim 116

Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail 147

## **SRI LANKA**

Ismail, Jezima 156

Marsoof, Justice Dr Saleem 157

Mufti, MIM Rizwe 136

## **SUDAN**

Abdalla, Asma Mohamed 126

Aboulela, Leila 172

Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed "Mo" 161

## **SWEDEN**

Chimaev, Khamzat (new) 186

Zain, Maher 176

## **SWITZERLAND**

Ramadan, Dr Tariq 119

## **SYRIA**

Al-Assad, HE President Bashar 126

Al-Julani, Abu Muhammad 188

Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed Ratib 115

Taha, HE Sheikh Uthman 96

Al-Yaqoubi, Sheikh Muhammad 94

## **TAJIKISTAN**

Abdulkodirzoda, Mufti Saidmukarram 136

## **TANZANIA**

Gurnah, Abdulrazak 173

Hassan, HE President Samia Suluhu 95

## **THAILAND**

Dahlan, Professor Dr Winai 167

Sabur, M Abdus 157

## **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

Hosein, Sheikh Imran 144

## **TUNISIA**

Ghannouchi, Sheikh Rached 97

Jabeur, Ons 185

Saied, HE President Kais 126

## **TÜRKIYE**

Sahin, Dr Uğur 108

Sancar, Dr Aziz 168

Çelebi, Master Hasan 176

Davutoğlu, Ahmet *130*  
 Duzyatan, Engin Altan *176*  
 Erdoğan, HE President Recep Tayyip *53*  
 Gelenbe, Dr Erol *168*  
 Gülen, Fethullah *142*  
 Haqqani, Sheikh Mehmet Adil *142*  
 İmamoglu, Dr Ataç *168*  
 Kalin, Dr Ibrahim *87*  
 Karaman, Professor Dr Hayrettin *119*  
 Pamuk, Orhan *176*  
 Sabancı, Güler *163*  
 Topbaş, Osman Nuri *143*  
 Ulukaya, Hamdi *163*  
 Yalçın, Rabia *176*

### **UGANDA**

Mamdani, Professor Mahmood *117*

### **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

Alabbar, Mohamed Ben Ali *161*  
 Al-Ameri, Khalid *150*  
 Al-Awadhi, Najla *182*  
 Barakat, Maha *150*  
 Al Gurg, Raja *162*  
 Al-Jaber, Fatima *162*  
 Al-Kaabi, Noura *183*  
 HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum  
*126*  
 Mattar, Dr Maryam *151*  
 HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-  
 Nahyan *51*  
 Al-Qassimi, Sheikh Lubna *26*  
 HH Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qassimi  
*147*  
 Al-Rostamani, Hana *162*

### **UNITED KINGDOM**

Abdel Halcem, Professor Muhammad *119*  
 Ahmed, Riz *176*  
 Aslam, Syima (new) *177*  
 Aziz, Asif *163*  
 Babikir, Sheikh Ahmed *143*  
 El-Banna, Dr Hany *148*  
 Farah, Mohamed *186*  
 Hafiz, Asim (new) *157*  
 Hasan, Mehdi *184*  
 Al-Hassani, Dr Salim *168*  
 Hellyer, Dr Hisham *120*  
 Husain, Mishal *184*  
 Hussain, Nadiya *186*  
 Islam, Yusuf *177*  
 Ismail, Sufyan *148*  
 Issa, Mohsin and Issa, Zuber (new) *164*  
 Khan, Sadiq *106*  
 Mangera, Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf *120*

Nadwi, Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram *120*  
 Nakshawani, Ammar *143*  
 Pirzada, Shaykh Muhammad Imdad Hussain *120*  
 Qureshi, Khawar *157*  
 Randeree, Shabir *164*  
 Sanders, Peter *177*  
 Sardar, Ziauddin *120*  
 Shah, Naseem *130*  
 Tate, Andrew (new) *186*  
 Tzortzis, Hamza (new) *143*  
 Warsi, Baroness Sayeeda *130*  
 Williams, Paul (new) *157*  
 Winter, Dr Timothy (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim  
 Winter) *99*  
 Yousaf, Humza (new) *130*  
 Yusuf, Sami *108*

### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Aden, Halima *177*  
 Awad, Nihad *158*  
 Bewley, Aisha *122*  
 Beydoun, Khaled *158*  
 Carson, André *131*  
 Chappelle, David Khari Webber *177*  
 Elgamal, Dr Taher *168*  
 Ellison, Keith *131*  
 El-Erian, Mohamed *164*  
 Hanson, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf *89*  
 Henry, Aisha Gray *177*  
 Jackson, Dr Sherman *122*  
 Kabbani, Sheikh Muhammad Hisham *144*  
 Kareem, Abdul-Jabbar *187*  
 Khan, Dr Mehmood *169*  
 Khan, Salman *158*  
 Khan, Shahid *164*  
 Magid, Imam Mohammed *159*  
 Mogahed, Dalia *159*  
 Mohammed II, Warithudeen *138*  
 Mohyeldin, Ayman *184*  
 Nasr, Professor Seyyed Hossein *95*  
 Al-Ninowy, Sheikh Dr Muhammad bin Yahya *144*  
 Omar, Ilhan *131*  
 Oz, Dr Mehmet *184*  
 Qadhi, Dr Yasir *122*  
 Sarsour, Linda *159*  
 Shakir, Imam Zaid *144*  
 Siddique, Professor Teepu *169*  
 Suleiman, Imam Omar *144*  
 Tlaib, Rashida *131*  
 Tyson, Mike (Malik Abdul Aziz) *187*  
 Wahhaj, Imam Siraj *144*  
 Wilson, Willow *178*  
 Ying, Professor Jackie *169*

Youssef, Ramy 178

Zakaria, Fareed 184

Zakariya, Mohamed 178

### **UZBEKISTAN**

Mirziyoyev, HE President Shavkat 129

### **YEMEN**

bin Hafiz, HE Sheikh Al-Habib Umar 39

Al-Houthi, Sheikh Abdul-Malik 96

Al-Jifri, Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al-Abideen 85

Karman, Tawakkol 151

Al-Zindani, Sheikh Abdul Majeed 140

### **ZIMBABWE**

Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa 140

*An interior view of the Shrine of John the Baptist inside the Umayyad Mosque, Damascus, Syria*



The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre









# The Muslim in 500 & 2024

## MARBODA