



AL-UMMAH

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A New Intellectual Initiative: Al-Ummah Launched to Counter Disinformation and Bridge the Muslim World





AL-UMMAH

Guidelines for Submission

Al-Ummah welcomes well-written articles that demonstrate depth, clarity, and analytical rigor. They must offer a structured analysis and a strong contextual understanding of the subject matter. We welcome contributions on global geopolitics, the Muslim world, political and economic developments, historical perspectives, and broader social, cultural and technological transformations. Please note the following requirements before submission:

- The article should be between 1,000 and 1,300 words and written in clear and polished English.
- It should present well-reasoned arguments supported by credible evidence where appropriate.
- It must be original and unpublished. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of facts, proper sourcing, and maintaining intellectual integrity.
- All submissions will undergo editorial review.
- Al-Ummah reserves the right to edit articles for clarity, style, and length.
- Publication is not guaranteed.
- Please include the author's full name and a brief bio with your submission.
- Submissions should be sent to: info@al-ummah.org.

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Al-Ummah: A New Voice for the Global Muslim Intellect

*B*y the grace of Allah Almighty, we held the spectacular event – launching Al-Ummah – we had dreamed of, planned, and finally launched.

Al-Ummah is a multilingual monthly journal and digital ecosystem established under the Al-Ummah Foundation, in affiliation with the Islamic Center for Research & Documentation, Dhaka.

Allah Almighty says in Aal-e-Imran: “And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided” and “Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.” (An-Nahl)

Also, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Whoever follows a path in search of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.” Guided by these timeless Qur’anic principles, this platform represents a dream realized and a definitive path forward.

Al-Ummah intends to be a premier global media hub, bridging the gap between Islamic intellectual heritage and contemporary knowledge systems. Operating across multiple languages—including English, Arabic, Bengali, and Turkish—our platform transcends regional and linguistic barriers to deliver rigorous scholarly research, credible

journalism, and strategic policy analysis. We stand firmly on five foundational pillars:

- Independence: Uncompromising editorial autonomy.
- Nonpartisanship: Rejection of sectarian, ideological, or political agendas.
- Moderation: Direct opposition to extremism, fanaticism, and divisive rhetoric.
- Integrity: Commitment to evidence-based analysis and academic rigor.
- Inclusivity: Respect for diversity and constructive engagement across different schools of thought.

This initiative addresses a critical modern challenge. Despite representing over a quarter of humanity, the Muslim world remains underrepresented in the global information landscape. Media institutions across many OIC societies frequently suffer from underinvestment, reactive reporting, and sensationalism, leading to an information deficit. Al-Ummah rises to meet this challenge. It is not merely another media outlet, but an intellectual catalyst aiming to cultivate a new generation of thinkers, journalists, and policymakers capable of navigating rapid geopolitical, economic, and technological shifts with wisdom and objective analysis.



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AL-UMMAH

Monthly Journal

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Dear writers, you can submit articles on current affairs, Islamic sciences, intellectual studies, history, and public policy etc.

We welcome original and neatly written articles in English, Arabic, Bangla and Turkish not exceeding 1300 words, to:

Email: info@al-ummah.org

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AL-UMMAH
FOUNDATION

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(BICRD), Dhaka, Bangladesh

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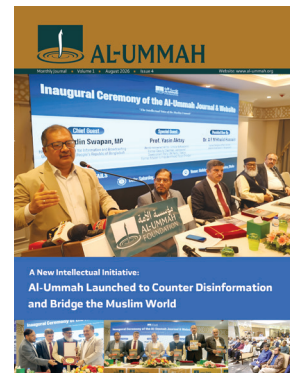
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Our Contributors



Issam Chehadat



By Professor Yasin Aktay



Mohammad Nasir Jawed

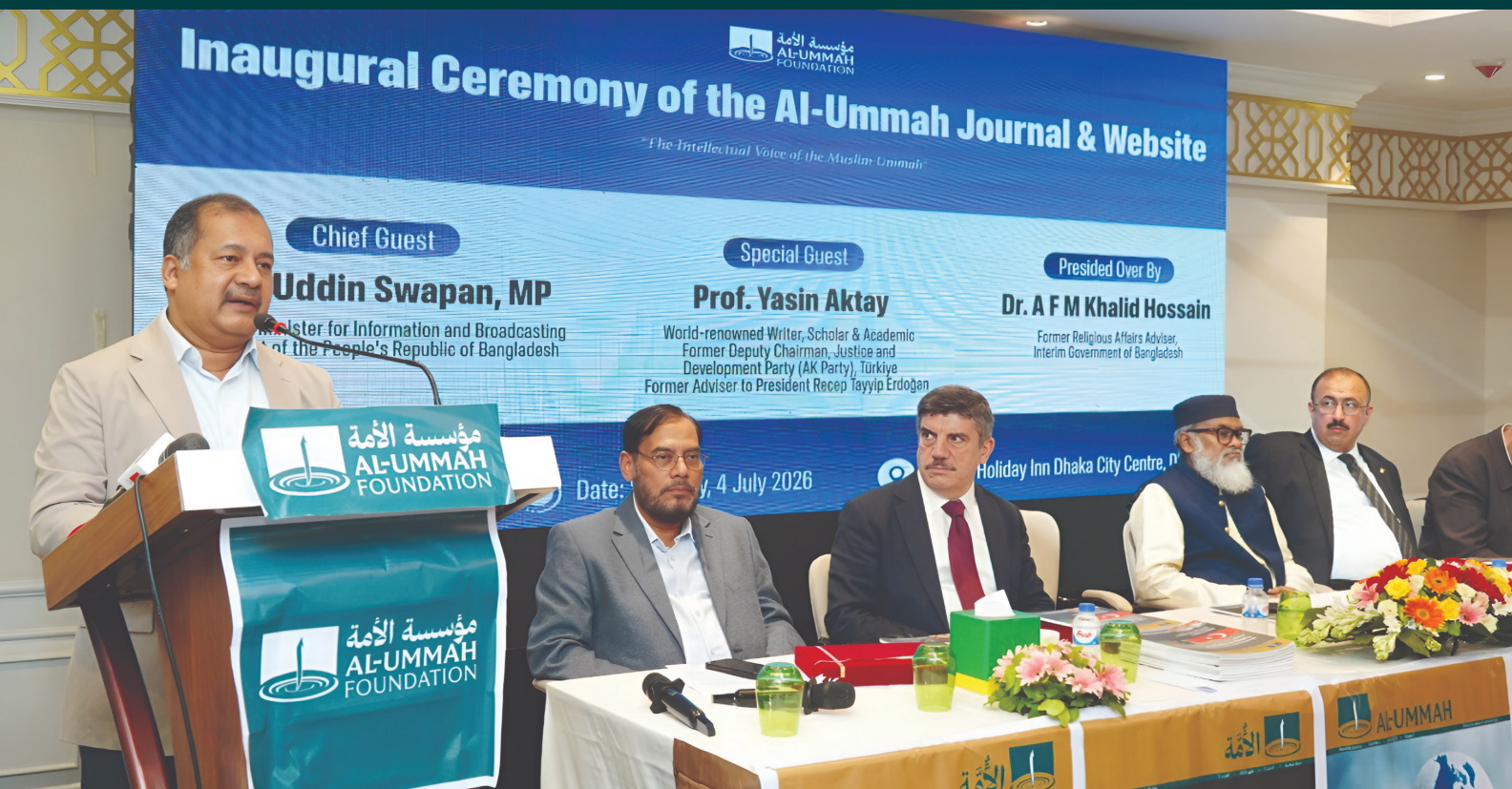


Ghulam Nabi Fai

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Bangladeshi Information Minister Zahir Uddin Swapan addresses the audience at the inaugural ceremony of Al-Ummah Journal and its digital platform on July 4 in Dhaka, marking the beginning of a new global intellectual initiative.

A NEW INTELLECTUAL INITIATIVE: 'AL-UMMAH' LAUNCHED TO COUNTER DISINFORMATION AND BRIDGE THE MUSLIM WORLD



By Al-Ummah Desk
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dhaka-based Al-Ummah Foundation, on July 4, unveiled a new global initiative aimed at bridging gaps in the Muslim world and strengthening knowledge cultivation, research, and constructive intellectual dialogue on a large scale.

The launch of a multi-language journal, Al-Ummah, along with its digital platform, the initiative—led by Mohammad Zakir Hossain, a veteran journalist and activist—positions itself as an international think-tank hub to foster research-driven dialogue, countering digital disinformation, and offering knowledge-based solutions to contemporary global challenges.

The high-profile debut of the journal and the website in Dhaka drew much



Mr. Zakir Hossain, Chairman of the Al-Ummah Foundation and Editor-in-Chief, Al-Ummah Journal, delivering a keynote speech at the launch of the Al-Ummah project, on 4 July, Saturday, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

attention in Bangladesh and outside, as it saw luminaries in politics, journalism, and academia from the Muslim world gather at the five-star venue to attend the ceremony.

A Bulwark Against Digital Chaos

Bangladesh's Minister of Information and Broadcasting Zahir Uddin Swapan, who was the chief guest at the launch function, set the tone of the ceremony by underlining the value of such an initiative.

"In the current digital era, while the free flow of information has created new possibilities, it has also increased the risks of confusion, misinformation, and social division," Swapan warned. "In this

situation, the need for credible intellectual initiatives built on the foundation of knowledge, morality, and responsible engagement is greater than ever before."

Noting that the current world was passing through a deep and complex crisis, he spoke of peaceful coexistence, which is possible, he said, only through the free exchange and mutual understanding of all kinds of global diversity, differing opinions, and ideologies; and for that, free and responsible practice of intellect is necessary.

As the world faces an abundance of data, the Minister felt that there remains an acute scarcity of reliable, nuanced analysis, and considered Al-Ummah

Prof. Yasin Aktay, ex-Advisor to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, addresses the audience, emphasizing the need to bridge Islamic intellectual heritage with contemporary policy-making.

as a potential vehicle for “establishing a knowledge-based dialogue between Bangladesh and the world.”

Praising the multilingual publishing initiative, the Minister said that scholars or researchers of all ideologies must find a common solution that will bring welfare to civilization. No single hero or society of the past could alone provide a permanent solution to global crises.

Sustainable development hinges on a culture of coexistence despite differing viewpoints, he argued, and hoped that “Al-Ummah will play a positive role in achieving that goal.” Swapan said the Al-Ummah journal and website can become a vital instrument for knowledge-based discussion and research contributions.

He likened the vision of Bangladesh under the present government to the objectives of the Al-Ummah journal and said that a deep understanding of mutual cultures would help eliminate all misunderstandings at both international and domestic levels.



Bridging Heritage and Modern Policy

Special guest Professor Yasin Aktay, a prominent Turkish academic and former advisor to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, welcomed the Al-Ummah initiative and suggested that the platform could mobilize a new generation of researchers and young intellectuals to build a more united, conscious society through strategic, truth-based collaboration.

He emphasized the systemic disconnect between the historical intellectual heritage of the Muslim world and its current global realities and said: “One of the biggest challenges for Muslim society in today’s world is to create an effective bridge between knowledge, research, and practical policymaking.”



Al-Ummah, Professor Aktay said, can make important contributions to building a conscious, united, and intellectually enriched Muslim society based on truthful knowledge cultivation, intercultural dialogue, and cooperation.”

“For centuries, Muslim civilization has made significant contributions to knowledge, philosophy, science, and human thought. However, in contemporary global realities, the effective connection between that heritage and the current generation needs to be strengthened further,” Aktay elaborated.

Dr. A F M Khalid Hossain, former Religious Affairs Advisor to the Interim Government of Bangladesh, presided over the event. He noted that navigating political, economic, and AI-driven technological shifts requires “knowl-

edge-based leadership.”

He said, “There is no alternative to knowledge-based leadership and responsible research to overcome these challenges.”

Beyond Emotion: A Pragmatic Agenda

Zakir, who is the Chairman of the Al-Ummah Foundation and Editor-in-Chief, said: “This initiative has been undertaken to strengthen the intellectual voice of the Muslim Ummah. We do not claim to change the world overnight. We believe that permanent and positive change begins through knowledge, constructive dialogue, and responsible journalism,” he said.

“We do not claim to change the world overnight,” said Zakir. “We believe that permanent and positive change begins



Participants at the launch event are reviewing the third issue of the monthly magazine “Al-Ummah” during the official unveiling ceremony.

through knowledge, constructive dialogue, and responsible journalism. Our goal is to inspire the new generation of thinkers... to contribute to the positive transformation of society.”

He took the occasion to make it clear that Al-Ummah is less about rapid ideological shifts and more about long-term intellectual influence.

Zakir said, “Al-Ummah is a platform that will strengthen the intellectual voice of the Muslim Ummah through research, meaningful discussion, and knowledge exchange. Our goal is to inspire the new generation of thinkers, writers, and researchers so that they can contribute to the positive transformation of society with wisdom, integrity, and human values.”

The launch drew an array of international policy experts, academics, and digital innovators, reflecting the platform’s broad operational mandate. Panel discussions covered a spectrum of modern anxieties, including:

- The intellectual leadership of the Muslim world
- The credibility of information in the age of generative artificial intelligence.
- The modernization of educational frameworks in the Global South.
- The growing footprint of Islamic finance and technology-driven knowledge production.



The launch event in Dhaka attracted a huge audience, including academics, policymakers, journalists, and scholars.

- Strategic collaboration among Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states.

Key perspectives were delivered by international delegates, including Engineer Munir Said (Islamic World Forum for Thought and Civilization), Dr. Ayman Zeidan (International Al-Quds Foundation), and Dr. Fatih Abdul Qadir (Al-Rawad Academy, Istanbul), alongside local administrative figures such as Public Administration Reform Commission member Dr. Mohammed Ayub Miah and former Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan. Editorial leaders Issam Shehadat and Rahmi Osman Kaçmaz also detailed the platform's digital transformation roadmap.

Analysts believe that research-based discussions on geopolitics, economics, technology, Islamic finance, education, and culture are becoming increasingly vital in international policymaking processes. Initiatives like the Al-Ummah journal and website can serve as effective platforms for communication and knowledge sharing among researchers, journalists, and policymakers in the Muslim world.

The speakers hoped that such an initiative would be able to build an inclusive, responsible, and intellectually enriched global network, which could turn into a major stage representing the thoughts and research of the Muslim world at the international level in the future.



Guests listen attentively as speakers outline Al-Ummah's vision for research-driven dialogue and intellectual renewal.

Speakers participating in the event highlighted the importance of building a knowledge-based society, the intellectual renaissance of the Muslim world, research collaboration, responsible media, and global dialogue. They stated that in today's world, sustainable development, peace, and intellectual leadership can only be established through the integration of knowledge, technology, and strategic cooperation.

The organizers stated that Al-Ummah has begun its journey out of the necessity to expand the scope of research-driven and intellectual discussions, rather than emotion-based ones, to tackle the political, economic, and

cultural challenges of the Muslim world in the current world order. The journal aims to create new horizons for knowledge-based discussion by publishing research papers, analytical articles, policy papers, opinion pieces, and special reports on international affairs.

Currently, Al-Ummah is being published in four languages—Bengali, English, Arabic, and Turkish. According to the organizers, there are plans to add several more languages in the future to further expand knowledge exchange and intellectual cooperation among researchers and thinkers from different regions of the world. At the same time, this platform will also work to create strategic connections and knowledge-based co-



Zakir Hossain led his team to honor some of the guests, where commemorative plaques were presented in recognition of their distinguished participation.



A commemorative shield exchanged as a symbol of international academic cooperation.



Organizers honor distinguished guests for their contributions to the inaugural event.

operation among the member countries of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Conclusion

As regional think tanks increasingly influence international policy, Al-Ummah

enters a competitive but vital space. Organizers confirmed plans to expand the platform into additional languages, aiming to build an inclusive global network that shifts the discourse surrounding the Muslim world away from reactive emotion and toward rigorous, peer-reviewed analysis.

Who Said What

By **Al-Ummah Desk**
Dhaka, Bangladesh



Zahir Uddin Swapan

Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Bangladesh

"The need for credible intellectual initiatives built on the foundation of knowledge, morality, and responsible engagement is greater than ever before."



Professor Yasin Aktay

Ex-Chief Advisor to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

"The Muslim world has a rich intellectual heritage. The connection of that knowledge cultivation with contemporary global realities needs to be strengthened further. Al-Ummah can be an effective platform to connect researchers and young thinkers across the globe through research, dialogue, and collaborative thinking."



Dr. A F M Khalid Hossain

Ex-Religious Affairs Advisor to the Interim Government of Bangladesh

"This platform will play a pioneering role in forging strategic connections and cooperation among OIC member countries and in finding knowledge-based and intellectual solutions to the contemporary challenges of the Muslim Ummah."



Dr. Mohammed Ayub Miah

Ex-Member, the Interim Government's Consensus Commission, Bangladesh

"Establishing an academic journal is not just an institutional achievement. It is an important investment for knowledge cultivation, future generations, and human civilization. History bears witness that Muslims led global civilization not because of wealth or power, but because they pursued knowledge, free thought, and the spirit of seeking truth."



Dr. Niaz Ahmed Khan

Ex-VC, Dhaka University, Bangladesh

"Due to political divisions, we have unnecessarily isolated and narrowed down society for a long time. Therefore, platforms like this create an important opportunity to further strengthen our bonds of mutual cooperation, dialogue, and unity."

Mohammed Zakir Hossain

Chairman, the Al-Ummah Foundation; Editor-in-Chief, Al-Ummah

"We want this platform to inspire the new generation of thinkers, writers, and researchers through research, constructive dialogue, and knowledge cultivation."

Engineer Munir Said

Deputy Secretary-General, the Islamic World Forum for Thought and Civilization

"The necessity of knowledge-based and research-driven initiatives for the Muslim Ummah at present is greater than at any time in the past. Past experiences teach us that division and disunity are our greatest weaknesses. It is not due to a lack of power, but rather a lack of unity, that the Muslim world has repeatedly fallen into crises."



Ayman Zeidan

Executive Director, the International Al-Quds Foundation

"The ongoing humanitarian disaster in Palestine is painful. Despite the existence of nearly 2 billion Muslims, the people of Palestine are still facing horrific suffering today. This shows our core crisis is not a shortage in numbers, but rather mutual disunity and a lack of coordination."



Professor Dr. M. Abdul Aziz

Director General, Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT)

Intellectual engagement is vital to overcoming the crises currently confronting the Muslim world. Al-Ummah, in this regard, is destined to play a key role in uniting the Ummah as an effective institution. I wish Al-Ummah every success and fulfilment in its mission to foster unity within the Muslim Ummah and to address these challenges.



Dr. Fatih Abdul Qadir

Al-Rawad Academy, Istanbul

"A sustainable and just solution to the Palestine crisis is not possible without establishing effective unity, cooperation, and knowledge-based leadership within the Muslim Ummah. We must move forward along the path of unity, not division, and build the future keeping knowledge, wisdom, and dialogue at the forefront."



Issam Chehadat

Senior Editor, Daily Sabah, Istanbul

"Publishing a magazine in four languages means balancing different writing traditions while preserving a single editorial identity and vision across every edition. Al-Ummah's greatest asset is the trust people place in its mission and team. Every contributor to the first issue did more than write an article—they helped lay the foundation for the magazine's future."



Rahmi Osman Kaçmaz

Strategic Design Partner of the Al-Ummah Website

"We built Al-Ummah Journal to be more than a news platform. Our vision is to create a trusted digital home for the global Ummah, where truth is protected, knowledge is shared, and people remain connected across languages and borders. This launch is only the beginning of a platform designed to serve generations to come."





Mohammad Zakir Hossain delivers the keynote address during the launch ceremony in Dhaka.

SETTING A ROADMAP TO INTELLECTUAL ENLIGHTENMENT



By Mohammad Zakir Hossain
Chairman, Al-Ummah Foundation



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Al-Ummah

The world is undergoing profound structural transformation. Technological acceleration, geopolitical competition, economic uncertainty, regional conflicts, environmental challenges, and

social change are reshaping the global order.

In such a grim landscape, the Muslim Ummah—comprising nearly 2 billion people—finds itself at a critical intellectual crossroads. Despite enjoying rich intellectual, cultural, and civilizational traditions, Muslims remain underrepresented in the global information and knowledge landscape.



Challenges are immense, so are the opportunities. And, between them, we need to have a way out. We cannot afford to consider these challenges as shortcomings but as a call to renewal. They underscore the urgent need to invest in knowledge, strengthen independent and sensible journalism, encourage research-based public discourse, and cultivate a new generation of media professionals and intellectual leaders who can engage with contemporary realities with wisdom, competence, and integrity.

We believe that informed dialogue, serious scholarship, and constructive engagement can contribute to a more

enlightened, peaceful, and prosperous future.

The Role of Media

Media ecosystems in our part of the world react to events rather than anticipate them, report incidents without sufficient context, and amplify divisions instead of fostering informed dialogue and strategic thinking. The result is an information deficit that weakens our collective capacity to understand complex global developments and to articulate our own perspectives with confidence and credibility.

In many of our societies, media institutions continue to face serious challenges like insufficient investment in quality journalism & research, inadequate professional training, limited cross-border collaboration, dependence on external information sources, and, often, the prevalence of sensationalism over substantive analysis.

Furthermore, while the digital revolution has transformed communication worldwide, many media institutions across OIC countries have not yet fully harnessed emerging technologies, multilingual communication platforms, and knowledge networks capable of projecting the intellectual contributions of the Muslim world onto the global stage.

It is precisely in response to these needs that Al-Ummah has been conceived—



not as another media outlet competing in an already crowded information space, but as an intellectual platform committed to raising the standards of public discourse and contributing to the intellectual revitalization of the Muslim Ummah.

Al-Ummah does not claim to transform the world overnight. Rather, it seeks to take a meaningful first step toward nurturing an intellectual environment where knowledge triumphs over ignorance, moderation over extremism, and dialogue over division.

We sincerely believe that the establishment of Al-Ummah represents an investment in intellectual renewal, responsible journalism, and a future in which the Muslim Ummah contributes

positively and confidently to global civilization.

A Call to Action

If a meaningful journey begins with a single step, we have taken that small but vitally important step with much hope and humility. The community has to decide whether it needs such a platform where differences can be discussed with civility, ideas can be examined with wisdom, and knowledge can be pursued in service of the common good.

The question may arise: why this initiative now, why this platform, and why the need to create a media ecosystem? A cursory look at global affairs, more so the grim state of the Muslim world,



will answer why this is a long-overdue initiative on the part of the Ummah. The project that we have undertaken intends to introspect within and take steps to assert on the global level. Only time will tell the significance of such an initiative. Till then, we need to cooperate and coordinate on such projects to make it sustain.

If a journey has to take the single step to begin with, we have taken that small but vitally important step with much hope and humility. Such a platform offers space where differences can be discussed with civility, ideas can be examined with wisdom, and knowledge can be pursued in service of the common good.

The idea is to let the Al-Ummah Foun-

dation become a harbinger of an intellectual era, serving as a hub for rigorous strategies. It's a mission to work for unity, connecting the Muslim world, and discuss issues facing the Ummah – be it a hunger crisis, water scarcity, or raging conflicts in the world.

Al-Ummah pledges to stand against injustice being committed in any part of the world, work for human dignity, and lend voice to those who are too weak to be heard. The future of the Ummah depends not on what we hope for but on what we build together, not on what we dream but on what we achieve, and not on what we believe but on what we do. Let us rise to this challenge with determination, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to the values that unite us all.



(L-R): Mr. Zakir Hossain, Chairman, Al-Ummah Foundation, Prof. Yasin Aktay, Ex-Advisor to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; M. Zahir Uddin Swapan, Bangladesh Minister of Information and Broadcasting; Dr. AFM Khalid Hossain, former Religious Affairs Advisor to the Interim Government of Bangladesh.

HUMANITY, MEDIA, AND THE FUTURE OF THE UMMAH: A VISION FOR COLLECTIVE RENEWAL



By Professor Yasin Aktay
Ex-Advisor to President Recep
Tayyip Erdogan

The Muslim world today stands at a critical juncture, desperately needing institutions capable of combining three essential dimensions of our civilizational mission: humanitarian service, knowledge production, and responsible communication.



In an era when the Muslim world navigates unprecedented challenges while holding within its grasp extraordinary opportunities, gatherings that transcend mere conferences or meetings become essential platforms for rethinking responsibilities, strengthening cooperation, and renewing collective vision. The Al-Ummah Foundation has brought together minds and hearts under such a meaningful platform, creating space for dialogue that extends far beyond the confines of any single nation or institution.

My deepest appreciation extends to the people and government of Bangladesh, a nation that has demonstrated remarkable resilience, humanitarian

commitment, social dynamism, and moral leadership. Few countries in the contemporary Muslim world have overcome such profound adversity through perseverance, social solidarity, and unwavering faith in their future. Bangladesh has emerged as a testament to how nations can transform challenges into opportunities through collective determination.

The Muslim world today stands at a critical juncture, desperately needing institutions capable of combining three essential dimensions of our civilizational mission: humanitarian service, knowledge production, and responsible communication.

The Al-Ummah Foundation possesses the potential to become one of those transformative institutions that can bridge these vital elements. While the Muslim world possesses immense human resources, rich civilizations, deep intellectual traditions, and powerful spiritual values, what we often lack is not capacity but coordination, not potential but organization, not compassion but mechanisms capable of transforming compassion into collective action. Our challenge lies in building institutions that connect hearts with minds, ideals with action, and local initiatives with global impact.

Media and the Struggle for Truth

Information today has become one of

the most critical forms of power, unlike in the past when supremacy and dominance were measured mainly through military strength, territorial control, or economic resources.

Narratives shape realities, perceptions influence policies, images move societies, and stories determine which tragedies become visible and which remain forgotten. The Muslim world often suffers not only from political and economic challenges but also from narrative challenges. Many of our realities are represented by others, many of our voices are filtered through external frameworks, and many of our experiences are misunderstood, simplified, or ignored.

This problem is not merely about public relations but about justice itself, because justice begins with truth, and truth requires accurate representation. We live in an age where misinformation spreads faster than facts, where digital technologies have democratized communication while simultaneously creating new forms of manipulation. The same platforms that empower citizens can also amplify polarization, and the same networks that connect humanity can also spread hatred and distortion.

Media today carries enormous responsibility, shaping public opinion, influencing international policy debates, mobilizing humanitarian responses, and creating cultural understanding or

misunderstanding. The challenge before Muslim media institutions is profound. We must move beyond reaction and develop proactive strategies, producing journalism that is credible, professional, evidence-based, and ethically grounded. We must resist both propaganda and sensationalism, defending human dignity regardless of political preferences. We must highlight not only suffering but also resilience, not only crises but also achievements, and not only conflicts but also solutions.

For too long, many stories emerging from Muslim societies have been dominated by themes of war, violence, instability, and crisis, yet our societies are also producing scientists, innovators, entrepreneurs, artists, educators, and humanitarians. These stories deserve visibility, platforms, and global audiences. Media is no longer merely an instrument of communication but has become an instrument of influence, identity formation, and social transformation. Those who shape narratives increasingly shape the future.

Significance of the Al-Ummah Platform

The Al-Ummah Media Platform possesses tremendous potential to address these challenges. The Muslim world does not simply need more media but better media, institutions capable of combining professional excellence with moral responsibility. This platform can



become a voice for humanitarian causes, a bridge connecting Muslim societies, an amplifier for young intellectuals, journalists, researchers, and innovators, and a center of digital knowledge production. Most importantly, it can become a space where truth is communicated with wisdom and responsibility.

Its mission should not be limited to reporting events but should contribute to shaping informed citizens and responsible communities. Knowledge production must be central to its vision, with research reports, digital publications, educational content, online seminars, podcasts, and analytical discussions building intellectual capacity across the Muslim world. Simultaneously, human-

itarian advocacy should remain a core pillar, with the experiences of refugees, victims of conflict, and vulnerable communities deserving systematic documentation and global visibility. Their stories should not disappear into statistics; human suffering must be humanized.

The platform should also invest heavily in youth empowerment, recognizing that the Muslim world possesses one of the youngest populations globally. This demographic reality is either an enormous opportunity or a serious challenge depending on how we respond. Young people need training, mentorship, platforms, and opportunities to develop leadership skills, media literacy, digital capabilities, and entrepreneurial initiatives. A generation capable of producing knowledge rather than merely consuming it will shape the future. Finally, the platform should build partnerships with universities, think tanks, research centers, and media institutions across the world, recognizing that the future belongs not to isolated actors but to networks. In the digital era, institutions that produce knowledge and communicate truth will increasingly determine the direction of societies.

A Strategic Relationship

The relationship between Bangladesh and Türkiye is not simply a diplomatic relationship between two states but is rooted in history, culture, memory, and

shared aspirations. The Turkish people do not see Bangladesh merely as a friendly nation but hold a much more special place in their historical memory. When Anatolia was under occupation and our nation was fighting a struggle for survival, the Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent, living thousands of kilometers away, supported the Turkish War of Independence with great sacrifice from their own limited means. The moral meaning of that support was far greater than its material value, demonstrating that we were not alone and that the heart of the Ummah was beating together with Anatolia. Even after a century, this loyalty has not been forgotten in Türkiye.

Today, as we stand in Bangladesh, we do not feel that we are in a foreign country but among brothers and sisters who have shared our joys and sorrows throughout history. The strongest foundation of all our future cooperation will be this shared history, this brotherhood, and this mutual sense of loyalty. Throughout modern history, both nations have experienced profound struggles, sought dignity, development, and independence, demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity, and occupied important positions within the Muslim world.

The relationship between Bangladesh and Türkiye has developed steadily

through high-level visits, institutional cooperation, educational exchanges, and increasing economic engagement. Politically, both countries cooperate within international organizations such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, often sharing similar concerns regarding humanitarian issues, development challenges, peace, justice, and human rights. Culturally, strong affinities exist between our peoples, with educational exchanges continuing to expand, academic cooperation increasing, and tourism and cultural diplomacy creating new opportunities for mutual understanding.

Economically, significant opportunities remain untapped despite growing trade relations. Collaboration in textiles, infrastructure, construction, manufacturing, information technology, and energy offers enormous possibilities, with both countries possessing dynamic private sectors capable of generating mutually beneficial partnerships. Strategically, defense cooperation offers important prospects, with Türkiye's advances in defense technology combined with Bangladesh's growing strategic capacities creating opportunities for constructive collaboration. Similarly, cooperation in disaster management, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian logistics, and emergency response can strengthen both coun-

tries› capabilities.

However, perhaps the most important area of cooperation lies in the realm of ideas. The Muslim world does not merely need stronger economies but stronger intellectual connections, educational partnerships, cultural exchanges, and media cooperation. Bangladesh and Türkiye can contribute significantly to this effort, helping create networks of scholars, journalists, researchers, entrepreneurs, and civil society leaders capable of generating innovative solutions to contemporary challenges. The future of our relationship should therefore be built not only upon governments but upon institutions, universities, foundations, and people-to-people engagement, because the strongest relationships are ultimately built by societies rather than states.

Building a Shared Future

The world is entering a period of profound transformation. Technological revolutions are reshaping economies. Artificial intelligence is transforming communication. Climate change is creating new vulnerabilities. Geopolitical tensions continue to generate instability. Meanwhile, many societies face crises of trust, identity, and social cohesion. The Muslim world is not isolated from these developments; in-

deed, in many ways, we stand at the center of some of these global transformations.

This reality demands a new generation of leadership that combines moral vision with practical competence, understands both tradition and innovation, can build bridges rather than deepen divisions, and values knowledge as much as power. The future cannot be built through nostalgia alone, neither can it be built through imitation. It requires creativity, confidence, and institutions. Most importantly, it requires hope, which is not a passive emotion but an active commitment to building a better future despite present difficulties.

The history of Muslim civilization teaches us that periods of decline are never permanent. Every civilizational renewal begins with ideas, every transformation begins with people, and every revival begins with confidence in one's values and capacities. The question is not whether the Muslim world possesses the resources needed for renewal—it does. The question is whether we can organize those resources effectively, whether we can create institutions capable of translating values into action, and whether we can transform compassion into policy, knowledge into development, and faith into constructive social engagement.



ROHINGYA CRISIS A GLOBAL CHALLENGE: EXPERTS

EXPERTS AT A ROUNDTABLE MEETING SOUGHT GLOBAL ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE, DIGNIFIED ROHINGYA REPATRIATION FROM BANGLADESH



By Al-Ummah Desk

Among the world's worst humanitarian crises, the Rohingya—an ethnic group in Myanmar—have drawn the greatest attention for being what the United Nations has described as “the most persecuted minority in the world.”

The issue has, over the years, become a global challenge involving human rights, international law, security, and geopolitical stability. But Bangladesh, owing to its shared border with Myanmar, bears the brunt of the crisis.

Nearly 1.4 million Rohingya Muslims fled massive-scale ethnic violence in the predominantly Buddhist state of Myanmar in August 2017 and entered Bangladesh and have since been living in the Cox Bazar's region. The country responded to the crisis positively, setting an example that can put many a country to shame. It's now home to "the world's largest refugee camp," according to the UNHCR.

Yet the crisis persists. The prolonged crisis is now exerting immense socio-economic, environmental, and security pressures on the local communities in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char.

The UNHCR notes that humanitarian aid is critical, with 95 percent of Rohingya households in Bangladesh dependent on humanitarian assistance. More than half of the refugees in the camps are under 18 and have limited opportunities for education, skills-building and livelihoods. Rohingya refugees are risking their lives on dangerous sea routes to Indonesia and Malaysia, which have been described as among the deadliest in the world.

More than 75 percent of the refugee population are women and children. Issues like human trafficking, transnational crimes, and security lapses in maritime routes are threatening the regional stability of South and South-east Asia.

Roundtable Meeting

Considering the gravity of the crisis and the world's apathetic attitude toward it, a roundtable discussion on "Navigating the Rohingya Crisis: Is Repatriation a Distant Dream?" was recently organized in Dhaka, the country's capital.

Speakers expressed concern that the Rohingya issue had gradually slipped from international attention despite Bangladesh continuing to face the crisis.

Jointly held by the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT) and the Center for Civilizational Dialogue (CCD) on July 6, the conference called upon the international community to play a more effective role in ensuring safe, dignified, and sustainable repatriation of Rohingya refugees sheltered in Bangladesh. The meeting drew a large number of scholars, journalists, researchers, human rights activists, diplomats, academics, and representatives of various think tanks from all over the world.

Professor Yasin Aktay, a prominent Turkish academic, social thinker, and former chief advisor to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who attended the program as the chief guest, praised Bangladesh's humanitarian role in sheltering an immense number of Rohingya refugees and assured Tur-

key's support to Dhaka on the issue.

"The friendship and partnership between Bangladesh and Turkey are long-standing. Turkey has always stood by Bangladesh in managing the Rohingya crisis and will continue to do so in the future," Aktay said.

He said Turkey advocated for a safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of the Rohingya people and assured acceleration of humanitarian activities, including food aid, education, health-care, and skill development training for the refugees.

Presiding over the meeting, CCD Director Professor Dr. M. Abdul Aziz termed the Rohingya tragedy as one of the major humanitarian challenges for the Muslim world.

"This issue is no longer confined between two countries; it has evolved into a global challenge involving human rights, international law, security, and geopolitical stability," Dr. Aziz said and stressed the need for global coordinated efforts between think tanks and civil society to achieve a permanent solution.

Among those attended the roundtable included Mr. Mohammad Zakir Hosain, Chairman, Al-Ummah Foundation and Editor-in-Chief, Al-Ummah journal; Dr. Badiul Alam Majumdar, Founder-Secretary of Shushashoner



Jonno Nagorik (SHUJAN); Prof. Dr. Anisuzzaman, former VC of Global University; Prof. Dr. Mohammed Fozli Ilahi, former VC of UITS; Dr. Nakib Muhammad Nasrullah, former VC of Islamic University; Dr. Abul Hasan M. Sadeq, Founder VC of Asian University; Issam Shehadat, Senior Editor of Daily Sabah (Turkey); Dr. Ayman Zeidan, Deputy Director General of Al-Quds International Institution; Colonel (Retd) Mohammad Abdul Haque; Mostafa Kamal Majumder, former Editor of The New Nation; Masud Mannan, former Ambassador of Bangladesh to Turkey; and Prof. Dr.



Abdul Latif Masum, VC of Patuakhali Science and Technology University.

Speakers at the roundtable expressed deep concern that the Rohingya issue has become significantly sidelined in recent times. They called for stronger international engagement to ensure the safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation of Rohingya refugees, warning that the prolonged crisis had evolved into a global humanitarian and security challenge rather than a bilateral issue.

The conference urged the United Na-

tions, ASEAN, and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to intensify coordinated efforts, while calling on Türkiye to play a more proactive role in international diplomatic forums.

The Rohingya are a Muslim ethnic minority group who have lived for centuries in Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. Despite living in Myanmar for many generations, the Rohingya are not recognized as an official ethnic group and have been denied citizenship since 1982, making them the world's largest stateless population.

ROHINGYA CRISIS: IS REPATRIATION A DISTANT DREAM?



By Professor Yasin Aktay

Ex-Advisor to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan



Rohingya children bear the human cost of one of the world's longest-running displacement crises.

*T*he Rohingya crisis is not merely a regional problem. It is a test of our collective humanity. It challenges the international community's commitment to justice, human dignity, and the principle that no people should be condemned to statelessness, displacement, and uncertainty indefinitely.

I acknowledge the remarkable role played by Bangladesh. Despite its own

developmental challenges and demographic pressures, Bangladesh has opened its doors to more than a million Rohingya refugees fleeing persecution and violence. Such a commitment cannot be explained solely by political calculations or strategic interests. It reflects a profound humanitarian consciousness and a moral responsibility toward vulnerable human beings.

“History will remember Bangladesh as a nation that refused to turn its back on a persecuted people when much of the world was content to express sympathy from a distance”

History will remember Bangladesh not only as a host country but also as a nation that refused to turn its back on a persecuted people when much of the world was content to express sympathy from a distance.

As a Turkish academic and public intellectual, I cannot discuss the Rohingya issue without recalling Türkiye's own experience with large-scale refugee movements. Over the past decade and a half, Türkiye has hosted millions of displaced people, particularly those fleeing the devastating civil war in Syria. At various times, Türkiye became home to nearly four million Syrian refugees, making it the largest refugee-hosting country in the world.

Like Bangladesh today, Türkiye faced enormous economic, social, and political pressures. Yet it adopted an approach based on the conviction that human lives must take precedence over political convenience. Millions of Syrians found

safety, education, healthcare, and opportunities to rebuild their lives.

Of course, no refugee-hosting experience is free from challenges. Questions of social integration, economic burden, public opinion, and security inevitably arise. Türkiye has experienced all of these debates. Bangladesh has experienced them as well. Nevertheless, both countries have demonstrated that humanitarian responsibility is not merely a slogan but a practical commitment requiring sacrifice and perseverance.

There is another important similarity between the Syrian and Rohingya cases. In both situations, humanitarian assistance alone cannot provide a permanent solution. Refugees do not wish to remain refugees forever. Humanitarian aid may alleviate suffering, but it cannot replace dignity, citizenship, security, and belonging.

This brings us to the central question of today's discussion: Is repatriation a distant dream? Repatriation should never become a forgotten dream. Yet neither should it become an unrealistic slogan disconnected from realities on the ground.

Experience from Syria offers valuable lessons. The return of refugees can only be sustainable when certain fundamental conditions are met: security, legal guarantees, protection from persecution, restoration of rights, access to livelihoods, and confidence in the future.



Displaced families make their way through refugee settlements in search of safety and basic necessities.

Without these conditions, repatriation risks becoming temporary, unstable, or even dangerous. The same principle applies to the Rohingya people.

Repatriation cannot simply mean crossing a border. It must mean returning home as equal human beings with recognized rights and dignity. Any discussion of return that ignores citizenship, legal status, security guarantees, and protection from discrimination will fail to address the root causes of displacement.

The international community therefore bears a responsibility that extends far beyond humanitarian funding. While humanitarian assistance remains in-

dispensable, it cannot substitute for political action. The world must maintain diplomatic pressure and pursue meaningful engagement aimed at creating conditions under which voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable repatriation becomes possible.

At the same time, regional actors have a crucial role to play. No single country can solve the Rohingya crisis alone. Effective cooperation among Bangladesh, ASEAN members, Türkiye, Muslim-majority countries, international organizations, and major global powers is essential.

Türkiye has consistently supported humanitarian efforts for the Rohingya people through governmental institutions,

civil society organizations, and international diplomacy. The Turkish people have felt a strong sense of solidarity with the Rohingya because they recognize their suffering as part of a broader human struggle against injustice and exclusion.

However, solidarity must now evolve into a more comprehensive international strategy. We need stronger diplomatic initiatives, greater burden-sharing, increased support for host communities, and sustained efforts to keep the Rohingya issue on the global agenda.

One of the greatest dangers today is not only displacement itself but the normalization of displacement. The longer a refugee crisis continues, the greater the risk that the world gradually accepts it as permanent. We have seen this happen in many regions. Refugee camps become semi-permanent settlements. Emergency measures become routine. International attention shifts elsewhere. We must resist that tendency.

The Rohingya people should not become another forgotten population trapped between memory and neglect. Their plight should continue to remind us that international justice remains incomplete whenever an entire community is denied its basic rights.

Bangladesh's example demonstrates that moral leadership does not depend on economic power alone. Türkiye's experience similarly shows that humani-

tarian responsibility can shape national and international identity. Both countries, in different ways, have illustrated that compassion and solidarity are not signs of weakness but expressions of civilizational strength.

As we reflect on possible pathways forward, we should remember that lasting solutions require more than political agreements. They require trust, accountability, reconciliation, and a commitment to human dignity. They require seeing refugees not as burdens but as human beings whose aspirations are no different from our own: safety, family, education, work, and a future for their children.

Conclusion

The question before us is not merely whether repatriation is a distant dream. The deeper question is whether the international community possesses the moral imagination and political will necessary to transform that dream into reality.

Bangladesh has demonstrated remarkable humanitarian leadership. Türkiye has sought to do the same in its own context. Together, these experiences remind us that compassion must be matched by commitment, and commitment must ultimately be translated into justice. Only then can repatriation cease to be a distant dream and become a realistic path toward peace, dignity, and hope.

WHO ARE ROHINGYA?

The military attack on the minority Muslim community in August 2017 was described as "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing" by the UN while several rights groups and other international bodies called the systematic human rights violations against and mass killing of Rohingya a "genocide" and "crime against humanity".

THE ROHINGYA ARE

The Rohingya are primarily Muslims who live in Buddhist-majority Myanmar's Rakhine state.

OVER 3.6 MILLION PEOPLE

They are made up of over 3.6 million people who have been rendered stateless and face discrimination in Myanmar.

MYANMAR DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE ROHINGYA

The government of Myanmar does not recognize the Rohingya among the country's 135 official ethnic groups.

ETHNIC CLEANSING AND CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

On Aug. 25, 2017 Rohingya faced an inhuman military clampdown -- termed ethnic cleansing and a crime against humanity -- forcing more than 750,000 of them to flee to neighboring Bangladesh.

IMPORTANT CHRONOLOGY

Muslims came to Arakan, now Rakhine State, an independent coastal kingdom in today's Myanmar, starting in the 1430s

Small number of Muslims lived in the region when Burmese (now Myanmar) empire conquered it in 1784.

Britain occupied Burma starting in 1824 until 1948, Buddhist-majority country gained its freedom.

1962: Myanmar launches state-sponsored persecution under "Operation Dragon King" targeting the Rohingya people.

1978: Following "Operation Clean and Beautiful Nation," nearly 200,000 Rohingya begin fleeing en masse to neighboring Muslim-dominated Bangladesh

1990: and nearly 200,000 more Rohingya reach Bangladesh.

2012: Myanmar forces renew targeting of Rohingya in which more than 200 people are killed and another 150,000 made homeless

IN THE YEAR 2019

Myanmar announces on Aug. 15 that it has "cleared 3,450 people to make the journey home from a list of more than 22,000 refugees provided by Bangladesh."



WHERE ARE ROHINGYA FLEEING TO?

Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, India, Japan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, the U.S., Canada and some European countries

NEW HOME: COX'S BAZAR, BANGLADESH:

There are now around 1.6 million refugees living in Bangladesh, mainly in squalid camps in Cox's Bazar

*Rohingyas steer their boat to an
uncertain future.*



THE ROHINGYA, OR THE GEOGRAPHY OF MISFORTUNE



Issam Chehadat

Senior Editor, Daily Sabah, Istanbul

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Al-Ummah

This article is based on a round-table discussion on Rohingyas titled “Navigating the Rohingya Crisis: Has Return Become an Unreachable Dream?” organized jointly by the Centre for Civilizational Dialogue and the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT Trust), in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on July 5.



*T*he tragedy of the Rohingya is one of the greatest humanitarian catastrophes of our time. In many respects, it echoes the tragedy of the Palestinian people, and for many years, it has also resonated with the suffering endured by Syrians.

Being a Syrian, I have experienced injustice, war, forced displacement, and exile. The dictatorial regime of Bashar Al-Assad forced nearly half of Syria's population to leave their homes. Around 12 million people were dis-

placed, either within the country or beyond its borders. Behind this staggering figure lie millions of shattered lives, families torn apart, and futures left suspended.

Millions of Syrians spent years living in tents, sometimes convinced that they would never see their homeland again. I still remember the statements of a senior military figure from the former regime, who publicly threatened those forcibly displaced, declaring that if they returned, they would find nothing that would make them want to stay.

At that time, while Syrians were enduring their own tragedy, we were also following the fate of the Rohingya. We prayed for their suffering to end, and we saw in their pain an echo of our own. Yet one reality was impossible to ignore: their situation was even more desperate than ours.

Curse of Geography

I often find myself reflecting on the notion of the "curse of geography." Syria has paid a heavy price for its geopolitical position. It has endured sieges, bombardments, hunger, and destruction. Yet that same geography also offered Syrians avenues of escape. They were able to flee to neighboring countries – Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye, before many continued their journey towards Europe. Many lost their lives along the way, and the Mediterranean

“ I often reflected on the notion of the “curse of geography.” Syria has paid a heavy price for its geopolitical position. Yet that same geography also offered Syrians avenues of escape. They were able to flee to neighboring countries - Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye - before many continued their journey towards Europe ”

swallowed thousands of dreams. But many others eventually managed to rebuild their lives elsewhere, with varying degrees of success depending on the countries that received them.

For the Rohingya, geography offered no such alternative. Arakan is wedged between Myanmar and Bangladesh. When they fled the campaigns of ethnic cleansing carried out by the Burmese military, the Rohingya had virtually only one possible destination: Bangladesh.

Despite its own economic and demographic challenges, this country opened its borders to them. History will undoubtedly remember this gesture, just as it will remember the gen-

erosity of the peoples who stood by Syrian refugees.

Yet one major difference separates the two tragedies.

Following the fall of Assad’s regime, Syrians have gradually begun to find their way back home. Their return remains fraught with obstacles, but it has once again become a possibility. For the Rohingya, by contrast, that prospect remains almost beyond reach. This difference largely explains the depth of despair that now permeates the refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Under Sheikh Hasina’s government, Bangladeshi authorities adopted an evolving approach to the Rohingya crisis. While continuing to advocate for their cause on the international stage, they gradually placed greater emphasis, in the daily management of the camps, on security considerations and administrative control. As exile continued, international aid declined, and economic and social pressures mounted, this policy progressively hardened, a trajectory also observed in several countries hosting Syrian refugees.

The political transition that took place in Dhaka has raised hopes for a more balanced approach, one more firmly grounded in humanitarian principles, transparency, and respect for fundamental rights. Reducing the Rohingya to an economic burden or a security

threat means overlooking the essence of the crisis. Before they became refugees, they were victims of a policy of persecution that deprived them of their citizenship, their rights, and ultimately their homeland.

Yet there are no illusions: the future of the Rohingya will not be decided in Bangladesh. The solution does not lie in Dhaka, but in Naypyidaw.

Is Return A Distant Hope

This question lay at the heart of the discussions: is the return of the Rohingya still a realistic prospect, or has it become nothing more than a distant hope?

No one disputes that the overwhelming majority of Rohingya wish to return home. But the real issue is not return itself. It is the conditions under which such a return could take place. Crossing a border alone does not bring exile to an end. Return only has meaning if it is accompanied by genuine guarantees: full recognition of citizenship, legal security, the restitution of property, protection from persecution, and, above all, the restoration of human dignity. Yet none of these conditions exists today.

The Rohingya remain deprived of the citizenship that was taken from them. Rakhine State remains deeply unstable. Security guarantees are virtually

non-existent. Added to this is a new reality: the security landscape has become far more complex. Alongside the Burmese military, several armed groups are now operating in the region, and they too have been accused of serious human rights violations against Rohingya communities. Under such circumstances, imagining a safe, voluntary, and sustainable return remains far more an aspiration than a reality. The discussions naturally reflected this tension.

Some participants stressed the urgency of creating the conditions necessary for return. Others reminded the audience that immediate needs could not be ignored: ensuring access to education, expanding healthcare services, and creating economic opportunities for a population that has spent years living in camps where the future seems suspended.

The Syrian refugee crisis was shared, to varying degrees, by several states in the region. Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, and, to a lesser extent, Iraq carried the weight of this massive displacement. Each developed its own approach to hosting refugees, but all eventually pointed to similar concerns: the economic cost, social tensions, and the difficulties generated by a conflict that had dragged on for years. I will not dwell here on the validity or the extent of these arguments.



Refugees undertake perilous journeys in pursuit of security and a better future.

Sharing Responsibility

Bangladesh, by contrast, bears almost alone the responsibility of hosting the Rohingya. This is what gives the crisis its particular dimension. Can one reasonably expect a developing country to shoulder indefinitely, and with almost no support, the human, economic, and political burden of an exodus on such a scale? The answer is clearly no.

Humanitarian aid can no longer be the only response. It remains essential,

but it cannot replace a genuine international political strategy.

The international community must assume its share of responsibility. It must exert meaningful diplomatic pressure on Myanmar's authorities to restore the rights from which the Rohingya have been deprived, above all their citizenship. It must also encourage closer coordination between the United Nations, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation



(OIC), and all other actors capable of influencing the course of this crisis.

The world is currently experiencing a succession of wars, humanitarian emergencies, and geopolitical upheavals that dominate international attention. Crises are multiplying, and with them comes the risk that certain tragedies will gradually fade from public awareness. This is precisely the danger facing the Rohingya today.

Yet there are tragedies that time does not make less painful. It merely makes

them less visible. Recent history has taught us that a forgotten crisis is never a resolved crisis. It continues to produce its consequences in silence until the day it resurfaces with even greater force. The tragedy of the Rohingya belongs to this category.

Turning away from their suffering will not make the crisis disappear. It will only prolong the exile of a people deprived of their land, their rights, and, for far too long, their hope of returning home.



THE UN CHARTER, KASHMIR, AND THE CRISIS OF SELECTIVE JUSTICE



Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai

Chairman, World Forum for Peace & Justice, New York

This article is based on a round-table discussion on Rohingyas titled “Navigating the Rohingya Crisis: Has Return Become an Unreachable Dream?” organized jointly by the Centre for Civilizational Dialogue and the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT Trust), in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on July 5.

*T*he recent open debate at the United Nations Security Council on “Upholding the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter and Strengthening the UN-Centered International System” was more than a routine diplomatic exercise.

For millions of people living under occupation, enduring unresolved conflicts, and waiting for justice promised decades ago, the debate represented a rare moment of cautious hope. Among them were the 23 million people of Jammu and Kashmir who continue to look toward the United Nations as the guarantor of their right to self-determination.

At a time when the world is shaken by wars in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and other troubled regions, the Security Council debate exposed a deeper crisis confronting the international system: the widening gap between the lofty principles of the UN Charter and the inconsistent manner in which those principles are applied.

Ambassador Sanita Pavļuta-Deslandes of Latvia reminded the Council that “it is our duty to protect the UN Charter, in order for the UN Charter to protect us.” Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia similarly described the Charter as the “cornerstone document” of international peace and security, warning against the growing disregard shown toward it.

These statements were important be-

cause they reaffirmed a truth often forgotten in modern geopolitics: the UN Charter was not designed to serve the interests of powerful nations alone. It was meant to protect weak and strong states alike through equal application of international law.

Pakistan’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar rightly emphasized that the Charter upholds the peaceful settlement of disputes and guarantees peoples the right to self-determination.

He reminded the Council that these principles are “sacrosanct” for Pakistan and form the basis of its engagement with the world. Most importantly, he drew attention to the unresolved dispute of Jammu and Kashmir, which has remained on the Security Council’s agenda for nearly eight decades despite multiple UN resolutions promising the Kashmiri people the right to determine their own future.

His argument went beyond Kashmir alone. He highlighted a painful reality that much of the Global South increasingly recognizes: when sovereignty is defended in one conflict but ignored in another, the credibility of the international order is weakened.

When occupations are condemned selectively, justice loses its meaning. When Security Council resolutions are enforced against some states but

conveniently forgotten in other cases, smaller nations begin to question whether international law truly applies equally to all.

Interestingly, even India's Permanent Representative Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni acknowledged that concerns about the legitimacy and effectiveness of the United Nations are growing. He spoke about the challenge of "double standards" and stressed that brute force and power politics cannot strengthen multilateralism.

Those words momentarily raised hope that India might finally connect its rhetoric about the UN Charter to the unresolved question of Kashmir. After all, Jammu and Kashmir remains one of the oldest disputes before the Security Council, and its people continue to await implementation of the very resolutions adopted by that body. Yet that hope quickly faded.

Rather than engaging substantively with the issue of Kashmir or the principle of self-determination, the Indian representative reverted to familiar accusations centered on terrorism and bilateral hostility with Pakistan. The shift was revealing. It demonstrated once again how discussions on Kashmir are frequently diverted away from the central issue: the political rights and aspirations of the Kashmiri people themselves.

George Bernard Shaw once observed, "Progress is impossible without change; and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything." That observation remains painfully relevant to South Asia today.

Pakistan's rebuttal, delivered by Counsellor Saima Saleem, sought to bring the focus back to the ground realities in Kashmir. She argued that India could neither deny nor conceal the internationally recognized status of the dispute and pointed to reports of civilian suffering, suppression of freedoms, arbitrary detentions, and denial of self-determination in the occupied territory. At the same time, she reiterated Pakistan's commitment to resolving disputes peacefully in accordance with the UN Charter and Security Council resolutions.

But amid this diplomatic exchange, one essential truth often gets lost: it is the people of Kashmir who continue to pay the highest price.

An African proverb wisely states, "When two elephants fight, it is the grass that gets hurt." In the case of Kashmir, generations have grown up amid uncertainty, militarization, political alienation, enforced silence, and recurring cycles of violence. India and Pakistan may continue their arguments for decades, but it is the ordinary Kashmiri man, woman, and child who bears the burden of delay. This is precisely why the role of the

United Nations remains indispensable.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres correctly observed that “The Charter remains humanity’s best hope for peace. But it is only as strong as the commitment of those responsible for upholding it.” He also reminded the Security Council that the world is demanding “action, not just words.”

Those words should resonate profoundly in the context of Kashmir.

The international community, especially the permanent members of the Security Council, must recognize that leaving Kashmir indefinitely unresolved is not a formula for stability. It is a recipe for perpetual tension between two nuclear-armed neighbors and continued suffering for millions of people.

A sustainable settlement cannot emerge solely through military management or rhetorical confrontation. It requires courageous diplomacy, international engagement, and meaningful dialogue involving all parties concerned — India, Pakistan, and the authentic leadership of the Kashmiri people.

History has repeatedly shown that entrenched conflicts are rarely resolved without outside facilitation. From Northern Ireland to East Timor, mediation and sustained international involvement helped create pathways toward peace where bilateral hostility

“At a time when the world is shaken by wars in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and other troubled regions, the Security Council debate exposes a deeper crisis confronting the international system”

alone had failed. Kashmir deserves the same seriousness of purpose.

If the United Nations genuinely wishes to restore confidence in the Charter and reaffirm the credibility of international law, it cannot afford selective implementation of its own resolutions. The principles of justice, self-determination, and peaceful settlement of disputes cannot remain conditional upon political convenience.

The debate at the Security Council demonstrated that world leaders still invoke the ideals of the UN Charter with passion and conviction. The true test, however, lies not in speeches delivered in New York chambers, but in whether those principles are applied consistently to the unresolved conflicts that continue to threaten global peace. Kashmir remains one of those tests. And the world is still watching.

AL-QARAWIYYIN

WORLD'S OLDEST EXISTING UNIVERSITY FOUNDED BY A WOMAN

The world's oldest university is not in Europe, as most people would assume; it is in Morocco and was founded by a Muslim woman over two centuries before its more widely known predecessors

The enduring legacy of Fatima al-Fihri reminds the world that great civilizations are built not by conquest, but by knowledge, learning, and the pursuit of wisdom.

*W*hen thinking of the oldest universities in the world, probably the first ones that come to most people's minds are Oxford and Bologna, but according to UNESCO and the Guinness World Records, Al-Qarawiyyin University (also written as Al-Karaouine) is the "oldest existing, and continually operating educational institution in the world."

Founded in 859CE by Tunisian-born Fatima Al-Fihri in Morocco's Fez, the university is not only the oldest higher education institution on Earth but also the first to be founded by a woman, and a Muslim one at that.

Fatima used her inheritance from her merchant father's wealth to found the university, which started as an associated school – known as a madrasa – and a mosque that eventually grew into a place of higher education. It also introduced the system of awarding degrees according to different levels of study in a range of fields, such as religious studies, grammar and rhetoric. Though the university first focused on religious instruction, its fields of study quickly expanded to include logic, medicine, mathematics and astronomy, among many others.

Thanks to the wide range of topics and the high quality of education it offered, scholars and students from all over the Muslim world visited and enrolled in the institution. Its popularity became

so overwhelming that the university introduced a strict selection system, requiring students to know the Quran by heart and have a good knowledge of Arabic as well as general sciences.

Sultans of the era supported the university with subsidies, gifts, and especially books and manuscripts. This led to Al-Qarawiyyin University having several libraries in its main and side buildings, housing countless influential works for its era. The historical library is open to the public to this day and shows Al-Fihri's original diploma, which was chiseled onto a wooden board back in the day.

The library currently hosts more than 4,000 valuable manuscripts in a range of fields, including historic copies of Islam's holy book, the Quran. Some of these precious texts include the 14th-century work of "Al-Muqaddimah" and an original copy of "Al-Ibar" by the famous Muslim historian Ibn Khaldun, a pioneer in sociology.

Other pieces include the famous "Al-Muwatta" – the earliest collection of hadith texts (the Prophet Muhammad's sayings) gathered by Malik, considered to be one of the first legal texts to incorporate both hadiths and fiqh, Islamic jurisprudence.

Just as it is common in modern universities, Al-Qarawiyyin held regular debates

“Fatima’s ideas and vision influenced many universities across Europe. Its professional and institutional learning structure – previously unseen and unheard of – echoed across the European continent in the following centuries”

and symposia, promoting the exchange of knowledge and development of science. The university itself was founded on the concept of higher education as we know it today. Al-Fihri’s idea was to create a social space enabling intellectual exchanges for progressive learning and teaching.

It would not be wrong to say that Fatima’s ideas and vision influenced many universities across Europe. Its professional and institutional learning structure – previously unseen and unheard of – echoed across the European continent in the following centuries. European countries were quick to see the immense potential behind this concept of learning and soon founded their own

institutions. Among the most notable of these are the University of Bologna, which was founded in 1088 in Italy, and the University of Oxford, which was founded in 1096 in the United Kingdom.

Throughout its history, the university has been the place of scholars well known to this date, such as 12th-century cartographer Mohammed Al-Idrisi, whose maps helped European exploration during the Renaissance. Despite the fact that the university was a gathering point for students of Islamic studies, it also attracted people from other religions as well. One of the Christian scholars visiting Al-Qarawiyyin was Pope Sylvester II (946-1003), who was known to have a passion for mathematics and astronomy.

The university, however, was only added to Morocco’s university system in 1963. Contrary to common misconceptions, both women and men could attend the university. In 1965, the institution was officially named the University of Al-Qarawiyyin instead of the short Al-Qarawiyyin. At the beginning of the 1990s, its student body shrank significantly due to interest in newer, Western-style universities.

To this day, the university keeps its traditional ways of teaching students by sitting in a semi-circle, called *halqa*, around the sheik or the instructor.





TEN YEARS ON: HOW FAILED COUP BID RESHAPED TÜRKİYE



by Al-Ummah Desk



Ten years after the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016, Türkiye continues to regard that black night as one of the watershed moments in the country's history.

What began as an armed attempt by members of the Gülenist Terror Group (FETÖ) to overthrow the democratically elected government ultimately evolved

into a turning point that transformed the country's political, military and security landscape, while reinforcing public commitment to democratic legitimacy and national sovereignty.

On the evening of July 15, 2016, FETÖ-affiliated infiltrators in the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) launched a coordinated coup attempt targeting key state institutions in Ankara and Istanbul. Military units seized strategic locations, including the Bosphorus Bridge (now called the July 15 Martyrs' Bridge) and the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge, while



fighter jets and military helicopters flew at low altitude over both cities.

The coup plotters also stormed the headquarters of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), where an anchor was forced to read a statement declaring that the military had taken control of the country. At the same time, tanks were deployed on major roads, and clashes erupted in several parts of the capital.

As the night unfolded, the coup escalated into an unprecedented assault on

◀ The Turkish people stood up united to defy an attempted coup against the Recep Tayyip Erdogan government on the night of 16 July 2016.

“ For Türkiye and its people, July 15 has become a national symbol of the people’s determination to defend democratic legitimacy, constitutional rule and the sovereignty of the state ”

the Turkish state. The Grand National Assembly of Türkiye was bombed while lawmakers were still inside the building. The Presidential Complex, police headquarters, intelligence facilities and other strategic institutions also came under attack, marking one of the most violent assaults on the country’s constitutional order since the founding of the Republic in 1923.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was vacationing on the Aegean coast when the coup began, appeared live via a FaceTime interview broadcast by

Turkish television channels. Calling on citizens to take to the streets, airports and public squares, he urged the nation to defend democracy and the constitutional order against what he described as an act of treason.

Millions of people responded to the call. Citizens from across the country confronted tanks, blocked military convoys and gathered at airports, bridges and government buildings. Alongside police forces and military personnel who rejected the coup, civilians played a decisive role in preventing the plotters from achieving their objectives.

By the morning of July 16, government forces had regained full control of the country. Thousands of coup participants were arrested, while senior military commanders who had been taken hostage during the night were rescued.

According to official figures, approximately 250 people were killed, and more than 2,000 others were injured while resisting the coup attempt. In Türkiye, those who lost their lives are commemorated as the “Martyrs of July 15,” whose sacrifice is regarded as a symbol of the nation’s determination to protect its democratic institutions.

The coup attempt was orchestrated by FETÖ, led by Fetullah Gülen, who had built an extensive clandestine network within state institutions over several decades. The organization systematical-

ly infiltrated the military, judiciary, police, educational institutions and other branches of government, creating what Turkish authorities describe as a “parallel state structure.”

Following the failed coup, Türkiye launched one of the most comprehensive institutional restructuring processes in its modern history. A nationwide state of emergency was declared, enabling authorities to dismantle FETÖ’s organizational network and remove its members from public institutions.

Large-scale judicial and security operations were carried out across the country. Thousands of military officers, judges, prosecutors, police officers, civil servants and academics identified as having links to the organization were detained, prosecuted or dismissed from public service. Turkish authorities argued that these measures were necessary to eliminate the organization’s influence and prevent similar threats from emerging in the future.

The restructuring extended well beyond security institutions. Reforms were introduced to strengthen civilian oversight of the armed forces, improve coordination among intelligence agencies and reinforce the state’s capacity to respond to national security challenges. Officials described these reforms as essential steps toward building stronger and more resilient public institutions capable of safeguarding the constitu-



Citizens gather in large numbers during a major public demonstration in Türkiye.

tional order against future attempts to undermine it.

The years that followed the failed coup marked the beginning of a new political era in Türkiye. In April 2017, the country held a constitutional referendum that approved the transition from a parliamentary system to a presidential system of government. The new system officially entered into force after the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2018, granting the presidency broader executive powers.

The constitutional changes enhanced political stability, streamlined decision-making and strengthened the state's ability to respond swiftly to domestic and regional challenges. The reforms created a more effective system of governance capable of meeting the

demands of an increasingly complex security environment.

The armed forces also underwent extensive restructuring. Civilian oversight over the military was reinforced, command structures were reorganized, and new mechanisms were introduced to improve coordination between the military, intelligence services and law enforcement agencies. Turkish authorities maintain that these reforms significantly reduced the possibility of future infiltration by clandestine organizations.

At the same time, Türkiye accelerated investments in its domestic defense industry, viewing strategic self-reliance as one of the principal lessons drawn from the events of July 15. Over the past decade, the country has substan-

“ Ten years after the failed coup attempt of July 2016 ,15, Türkiye continues to regard that black night as one of the watershed moments in the country’s history ”

tially expanded its capabilities in the production of unmanned aerial vehicles, precision-guided munitions, naval platforms, armored vehicles, missile systems and electronic warfare technologies.

Today, Türkiye’s defense sector is regarded as one of the country’s major strategic achievements. Domestically produced defense systems have become central to the country’s security doctrine and have also contributed to expanding Türkiye’s presence in international defense markets.

The lessons of the failed coup have also shaped Türkiye’s broader national security strategy. Intelligence-sharing mechanisms have been strengthened, institutional coordination has improved, and greater emphasis has been placed on protecting the state against internal and external threats. Officials continue to describe vigilance against FETÖ as a national security priority.

On the tenth anniversary of the failed coup attempt, commemorative ceremonies were held across all 81 provinces of Türkiye as part of the annual observance of July 15 Democracy and National Unity Day. The events included official ceremonies, visits to the graves of the martyrs, exhibitions documenting the events of that historic night, conferences, cultural programs and public gatherings honoring those who lost their lives while resisting the coup attempt.

Erdoğan and senior government officials reaffirmed that the Turkish nation had defeated one of the greatest threats in the history of the Republic through unity, determination and popular resistance. They also reiterated Türkiye’s commitment to continuing its fight against FETÖ both domestically and internationally, emphasizing that no effort would be spared to dismantle its remaining networks.

For Türkiye and its people, July 15 is no longer remembered solely as the date of a failed military coup. It has become a national symbol of the people’s determination to defend democratic legitimacy, constitutional rule and the sovereignty of the state. Every year, the anniversary serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by ordinary citizens, police officers and members of the armed forces who stood against the coup plotters despite overwhelming danger.



A sea of supporters fills the streets in Ankara during a large-scale nighttime gathering to frustrate the perpetrators of a failed rebellion.

Ten years later, the night of July 15 is widely viewed in Türkiye as the moment when the nation demonstrated that political power could not be seized through force and that the will of the people would prevail over military intervention. The sacrifices made that night laid the foundations for a stronger state, more resilient institutions and a more professional military committed to the constitutional order.

Today, Türkiye commemorates those events not only as a painful chapter in its history but also as the beginning of a new era. Emerging from one of the gravest challenges faced by the Republic, the country has sought to build what officials describe as a stronger, more united and more self-reliant nation, one capable of safeguarding its sovereignty

while advancing its ambitions in science, technology, industry and national defense.

As the Republic enters its second century, the Turkish leadership continues to portray the incident of July 15 as a lasting commitment to protecting the will of the people and preserving the integrity of the state. Guided by the lessons of that historic night and inspired by the sacrifices of its martyrs, Türkiye says it will move forward with confidence toward a future defined by stability, prosperity and national strength, a modern republic where military tutelage and coup attempts have been consigned to history, and where the nation's democratic institutions continue to grow stronger with each passing year.

THE LOSS OF A TITAN

JOHN ESPOSITO: THE TRUE CHAMPION OF THE MUSLIM CAUSE PASSES AWAY



By M. Nasir Jawed

Former Editor, Yearbook of the Muslim World,
New Delhi



*I*n the sad demise of Professor John L. Esposito, the Muslim world has lost not just a scholar of Islam but a supporter and an unparalleled advocate of the Muslim cause.

Internationally recognized scholar of Middle Eastern and religious studies, Professor Esposito devoted more than five decades to helping the West understand Islam. He was thus an authority on Islam and Muslim-West relations.

A student of the renowned Islamic scholar Professor Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, Esposito authored, co-authored, and

edited more than fifty books and other academic works, many of which became standard references in universities around the world. These works of eminent value were translated into dozens of languages, establishing Esposito as the greatest Western scholar of Islam and making him a hero in Muslim societies. Wherever he went – Pakistan, Malaysia, Türkiye – John Esposito, an Italian-American Catholic scholar from Brooklyn, was received like a rock star.

His seminal works include “Voices of Resurgent Islam and Makers of Contemporary Islam”, “Islam: The Straight Path”, “Islam and Politics”, “The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?”, “What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam”, “The Future of Islam”, “Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think (with Dalia Mogahed)”, “Shariah: What Everyone Needs to Know (with Natana J. DeLong-Bas)” and “Islamophobia: The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century.” After Sept. 11, “Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam”



Professor John L. Esposito (1940–2026): A distinguished scholar of Islam and Muslim–West relations.

challenged both the appropriation of religion by terrorists and the exploitation of terrorism by those eager to indict an entire civilization.

Esposito served as editor-in-chief of major Oxford reference works, including “The Oxford Dictionary of Islam”, “The Oxford History of Islam”, and “The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World.”

At the end of the Cold War, when great powers looked for an enemy to go after so that it kept flexing its muscles, Islam was perhaps the easiest target to fill the vacant role. When all their institutions and propagandist machines were put into execution to demonise the religion — of now 2 billion followers — and the Muslim scholars, Professor Esposito

“ The passing of John L. Esposito is a monumental setback for Islamic scholarship ”

stood like a rock with his bold scholarship, and through his intellectual excellence, he challenged misconceptions about Muslims, promoted interfaith dialogue, and inspired generations of students, scholars, policymakers, and faith leaders.

Beyond his usual academic engagement, Esposito held several leadership



John L. Esposito will always be remembered for his lasting contribution to Islamic studies.

positions. He advised governments, addressed universities, consulted policymakers, and edited encyclopaedias. He served as president of both the Middle East Studies Association of North America and the American Academy of Religion. His contributions were recognized with many honors, including the American Academy of Religion's Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion and Pakistan's Quaid-e-Azam Award for Outstanding Contributions in Islamic Studies.

Professor Esposito served as University Professor of Religion, International Affairs, and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, where he founded the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding in 1993. As its founding director, he helped establish the center as

one of the world's leading institutions dedicated to fostering dialogue, mutual respect, and cooperation among religious communities.

Earlier in his career, he spent nearly twenty years at the College of the Holy Cross, where he taught world religions, chaired the Department of Religious Studies, and directed the Center for International Studies. Yet the scale of his bibliography can obscure his larger achievement. He built an intellectual infrastructure for seeing Muslims as historical actors rather than permanent suspects.

A lifelong Catholic, Professor Esposito exemplified how deep personal faith can coexist with profound respect for other religious traditions. His scholarship consistently emphasized that understanding, rather than fear, should shape relations between Muslims and the wider world.

As Professor John L. Esposito passed away on July 15, 2026, at the age of 86, the Muslim world and the global academic community in general have lost one of the most influential and respected scholars of Islam.

We pray that Prof. Esposito's huge body of academic work continues to inspire future generations to pursue knowledge with integrity, compassion, and a commitment to mutual understanding!



Muslim leaders, scholars, policymakers, and cultural figures from around the world gather in Tashkent for the First International Islamic Civilization Forum, celebrating the enduring contributions of Islamic scholarship and science while advancing a shared vision of peace, tolerance, enlightenment, and international cooperation.

FROM TASHKENT TO THE WORLD: A HISTORIC CELEBRATION OF ISLAMIC SCHOLARSHIP AND SCIENCE

By M. Nasir Jawed

Ex-Editor, Yearbook of the Muslim World

In a world ridden with conflicts, wars, and much destruction and devastation, any talks of peace and tolerance bring in a fresh whiff of calm and fulfillment;

an oasis of hope and possibilities, reminding us of a sense of purpose in life and setting narratives that are heard very few and far between.

Such a voice of sanity cropped up from the historic land of Uzbekistan, known

“While much of the world is today engaged in geopolitical tussles and conflict, Tashkent held an international conference to discuss “Islamic Civilization: The Path of Peace, Tolerance, and Enlightenment”

as a cradle of human civilization, offering a fascinating blend of Persian, Turkic, and Islamic cultures. Uzbekistan has been working to preserve and promote its vast repository of ancient manuscripts and scholarly achievements, with recent initiatives such as the Center for Islamic Civilization in Tashkent.

While much of the world is today engaged in geopolitical tussles and conflict, Tashkent held an international conference to discuss “Islamic Civilization: The Path of Peace, Tolerance, and Enlightenment”

The First International Islamic Civilization Forum, organized on July 7-11 in Uzbekistan’s three cities: Tashkent, Samarkand, and Termiz, was coordinated by the Centre of Islamic Civilization in Uzbekistan in collaboration with the Committee on Religious Affairs, the Imam Maturidi, Imam Bukhari, and

Imam Termizi International Research Centers, the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan, and the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan.

The Forum was unanimous in stressing the importance of peace, tolerance, education, interfaith dialogue and scientific research in countering extremism, Islamophobia, xenophobia and distorted perceptions of Islamic heritage. It recognized the historical contribution of Uzbekistan and the broader Transoxiana region to the development of Islamic and world civilization.

The event is co-organized by the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) in cooperation with the Center of Islamic Civilization in Uzbekistan.

The event gathered top leaders – political, religious and academic – along with more than 300 speakers from 40 countries. Its program included a variety of conference sessions, cooperation agreements, book launches, visits to museums, historical sites, and cultural and diplomatic encounters.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in his welcome address, read by his advisor, Khayriddin Sultonov, welcomed the high-level international participation and noted that it “reflects growing global interest in Islamic civilization and its spiritual, scientific, and cultural

heritage.”

The President said: “The world is undergoing profound transformations that underscore the importance of upholding the values of Islam, which emphasize human dignity and the pursuit of knowledge and creativity.”

The conferences, spread across the three historically important cities, focused on the history of culture and science, highlighting the scholarship that emanated from the Mawaran-nahr region, also historically known as Transoxiana, and from wider Central Asia. For centuries, the region made an indelible imprint in promoting the cause of Islam through its contemporary developments in all fields, including religious sciences and philosophy; manuscript heritage studies; archaeology, museology; cultural heritage preservation; digital processes; cultural diplomacy; advances in research and publications.

The Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) lent its full support to the event. Its affiliated bodies like IRCICA and ICESCO were represented by their top leaders

On behalf of the OIC Secretary-General, Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet praised Uzbekistan’s role in highlighting the Islamic cultural heritage and its historical significance as the homeland

of great scholars such as Al-Bukhari, Al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Sina.

Such events, he said, would help counter “current discourses of hatred and polarization” and stressed the importance of drawing on the Islamic civilizational model – rooted in reason and diversity.

The Ambassador reaffirmed the OIC’s commitment to supporting initiatives to protect heritage, promote education and scientific research, and encourage intercultural and interfaith dialogue to spread the values of tolerance and peace.

The conference was concluded in Tashkent with the adoption of the Tashkent Declaration, outlining 10 global initiatives aimed at preserving, studying and promoting the intellectual, cultural and scientific legacy of Islamic civilization, Religious Affairs Committee of Uzbekistan reported.

The declaration, adopted by participants, expressed support for Mirziyoyev’s 2017 initiative at the U.N. General Assembly, which called for restoring and promoting the humanistic heritage of Islamic civilization.

It also described the establishment of the Center of Islamic Civilization in Uzbekistan as a milestone in expanding international cooperation in this field.

THE TASHKENT DECLARATION

The Tashkent Declaration adopted during the First International Islamic Civilization Forum in July 2026 establishes a framework of ten global initiatives to promote peace, tolerance, and the historical legacy of Islamic enlightenment. Its centerpiece is the creation of a World Alliance of Islamic Civilization, headquartered in Uzbekistan

The Declaration further outlined several international initiatives:

- Establishing a unified global digital register of Islamic civilization heritage through a dedicated platform for manuscripts, archival materials, archaeological monuments, intangible cultural heritage, and scientific research outputs;
- Cooperating in the implementation of an international program titled “Islamic Civilization: Heritage of All Humanity,” including the organization of international exhibitions, conferences, educational projects, and cultural events highlighting the contributions of Islamic civilization to science, culture, and education;
- Launching an International Prize for Islamic Civilization to recognize outstanding contributions to the study, preservation, and promotion of its heritage;
- Establishing an international foundation for research on Islamic civilization to support scientific research, the restoration of monuments, and the training of researchers;
- Creating a digital library of Islamic civilization encompassing manuscripts, scholarly works, archival documents, and educational resources;
- Publishing the International Encyclopedia of Islamic Civilization, covering biographies of prominent scholars, intellectual schools, cultural landmarks, and major achievements of the Islamic world;
- Preparing an annual international report on the state of Islamic civilization heritage, including assessments of heritage sites, research findings, and current challenges;
- Establishing a permanent platform for young researchers, scholars, students, and cultural heritage specialists in the Islamic world titled “International Youth Forum on Islamic Civilization”;
- Founding the International Union of Museums of Islamic Culture, Arts, and Civilization to strengthen cooperation among leading museums and exhibitions, organize joint exhibitions, and implement research, restoration, educational, and digital projects.





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