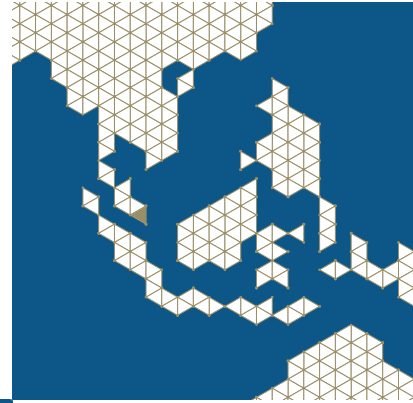


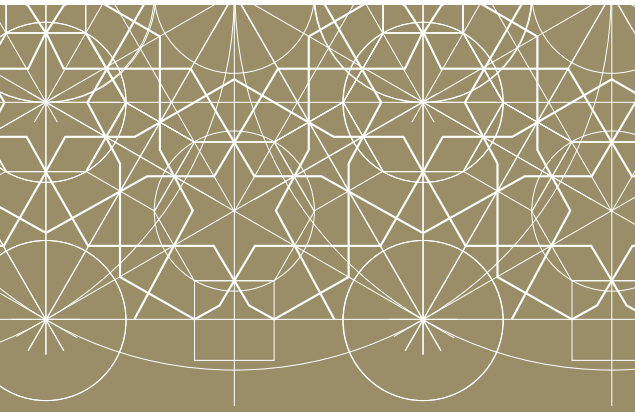


THE FUTURE OF FAITH

International
Conference
Singapore
7-8 November 2018

RELIGIOUS VALUES IN A PLURAL WORLD





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INTRODUCTION

In light of challenges facing the role of religion in the modern world, from time to time leaders from various faiths have come together to provide a united front and initiate calls for action with the aim of underlining the positive pathways that religion can contribute in addressing the global challenges today. Previous major initiatives include *A Common Word* (2012) which is endorsed by hundreds of Muslim and Christian thinkers and scholars who propose common ground initiatives for all humanity; the *Chechnya Conference* (2016) that concentrated on intra-faith issues and the identity of mainstream moderate Islam; the *Marrakesh Conference* (2016) led by H.E. Shaykh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, proposed a legal framework for inclusive treatment of minorities; and the *Fez Plan of Action* (2017) which focused on the role of religious leadership in counter-radicalization efforts.

In partnership with the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies led by eminent Muslim scholar Shaykh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, the Islamic Council of Singapore (MUIS) intends to complement these global initiatives which were rolled out in pursuit of a progressive and pro-active religious identity in the context of the rapidly changing and diverse world we live in now. The conference aims to contribute a significant voice for continued inter-religious cooperation in harnessing the positive role of religion as well as celebrate the milestones of the Singapore Muslim community as part of MUIS's 50th Anniversary. MUIS' book, "Thriving in a Plural World: Values & Principles of the Singapore Muslim Community" will be launched at the conference. Encapsulating the ethos of the Singapore Muslim Identity (SMI) that has driven the Muslim Community, MUIS hopes for it to be a call to action complementing Shaykh Bin Bayyah's deep foresight and proposal for an "Alliance of Virtues" for all religions especially those that live in plural societies to come together and develop a forward-looking framework to nurture thriving faith communities of the future.

BACKGROUND

Global societies have become increasingly diverse in an ever interconnected world. This diversity of humankind has never been as evident, especially in the public sphere where values, ideologies and lifestyles, whether culturally or religiously informed and inspired, compete against, or collaborate with, each other to achieve a common good for all. However, set against the backdrop of a volatile world beset with conflicts and tensions, the plurality of our world may easily transform into a threat to the peace, harmony and cohesion that is so much desired. As a recent study (Pew Research Centre, 2015) has forecasted, religious communities will continue to feature prominently in many societies around the world in the future. Although religious communities and leaders worldwide are aware of this challenge and have introduced programmes and initiatives to improve community relations and project a positive and progressive image of religion, the plethora of violent atrocities committed in the name of religion and tensions that run along religious lines or arise from religious contexts, cast doubts on the positive role of religion in the modern world.

Singapore, which functions as a cultural and economic gateway between the East and West, has a thriving yet diverse society, comprising different religions and races, and offers a model in harnessing the positive role of religion to strengthen community relations.

As a small nation which is well-connected globally and is largely dependent on international trade, Singapore needs to manage its diversity well. Over the last 50 years, Singapore has facilitated the socio-religious life of Muslims through the creation of community institutions such as the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS). In turn, MUIS has worked closely with the Muslim community and with other religions to shape a religious life that is both rooted in the Islamic faith and principles, and well contextualized to the local norms

of society and thrives in a modern, plural and globalized world. Desired religious values that focus on knowledge, principles, progressiveness and inclusiveness would enable Muslims to internalize the dynamism of Islamic values, grasp and overcome contemporary challenges, adapt to changing circumstances, embrace knowledge from other cultures, contribute to scientific developments and radiate blessings to all.

In the current global climate, Singapore's experience in embedding profound religious values and socially progressive principles in its approach to navigating modernity will have a wider appeal globally and may serve as a model for others. The International Conference Singapore (ICS) 2018 affirms the commitment of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) and the Singaporean Muslim community to contribute to the development of innovative solutions through progressive religious thinking and to share it with other communities, beyond the shores of Singapore for the global common good.

The ICS2018 seeks to convene religious scholars and thinkers, community leaders and activists, to discuss the future of religions and faiths in the increasingly diverse societies of the modern and globalized world. The ICS2018 is entitled "The Future of Faith: Religious Values in the Plural World," to strongly articulate optimism and hope for the future - that religion is not just a unifying force that brings people together in spite of and because of diversity, but that it also inspires positive collective behaviour that upholds human dignity, advances social development, and co-creates the common good for all.

In addition, the ICS2018 aims to serve as a platform to facilitate a forward-looking discussion with international religious scholars of various religious communities, on the best approaches and experiences to address contemporary and emerging challenges to socio-religious life, in order to nurture the positive role of faith communities in the future.

CONFERENCE DETAILS

OBJECTIVES

The ICS2018 seeks to:

- **Highlight** the efforts done by various faith communities and organizations that inspire and radiate blessings to all.
 - **Discuss** the way forward for faith communities, by harnessing their own religious traditions to come up with contemporary approaches that leverage on progressive values and strong institutions to address challenges ahead.
 - **Propose** a way forward through an innovative framework of religious values in plural societies.
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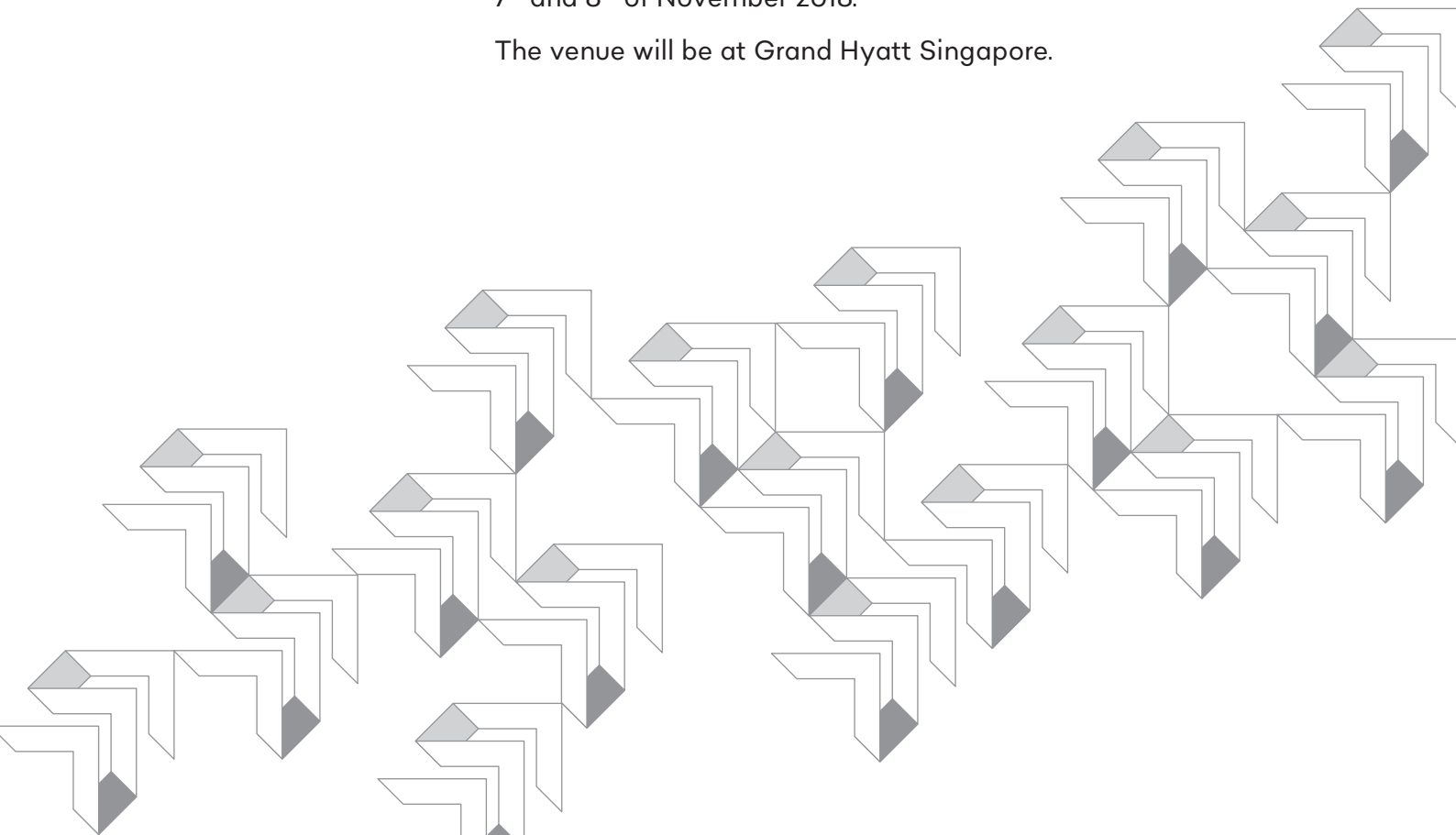
CONFERENCE TITLE

The Future of Faith: Religious Values in a Plural World

DATES & VENUE

The ICS2018 will be held in Singapore on the 7th and 8th of November 2018.

The venue will be at Grand Hyatt Singapore.



CONFERENCE THEMES



PANEL 1

Religious Traditions: Enhancing Religious Life in Modern Plural Societies

Over centuries of human existence, religions had accumulated rich and plural wealth of traditions. These traditions continue to be sources of guidance, not only in personal ritual lives, but also in public morality and normality. As human persons face the ever-shifting realities and new challenges, the central question then is how do we continue to interpret and re-interpret these traditions critically and creatively in offering practical and viable solutions to modern challenges and problems? How do religious traditions nurture active citizenry and embrace inter and intra-faith diversities? By its nature, traditions evolve and morph according to the context of time and space and the shifting realities. Indeed, only such dynamic and living traditions will survive the challenges of time and space.

This panel seeks to understand the changing contexts and realities of modern times and explore ways in which we should engage in creative and critical conversations with religious traditions. The session seeks to discuss the ways in which religions can accommodate changing social attitudes, beliefs, changing socio-political realities as well as the uncertainties of the future. Some of the questions that will be explored are as follows: How can people of faith contribute positively to nurturing cohesive public life, the common good and shared interests? More critically, how can religious communities remain faithful to their traditions, yet embrace dynamism and critical thought that can advance societies collectively and cohesively?



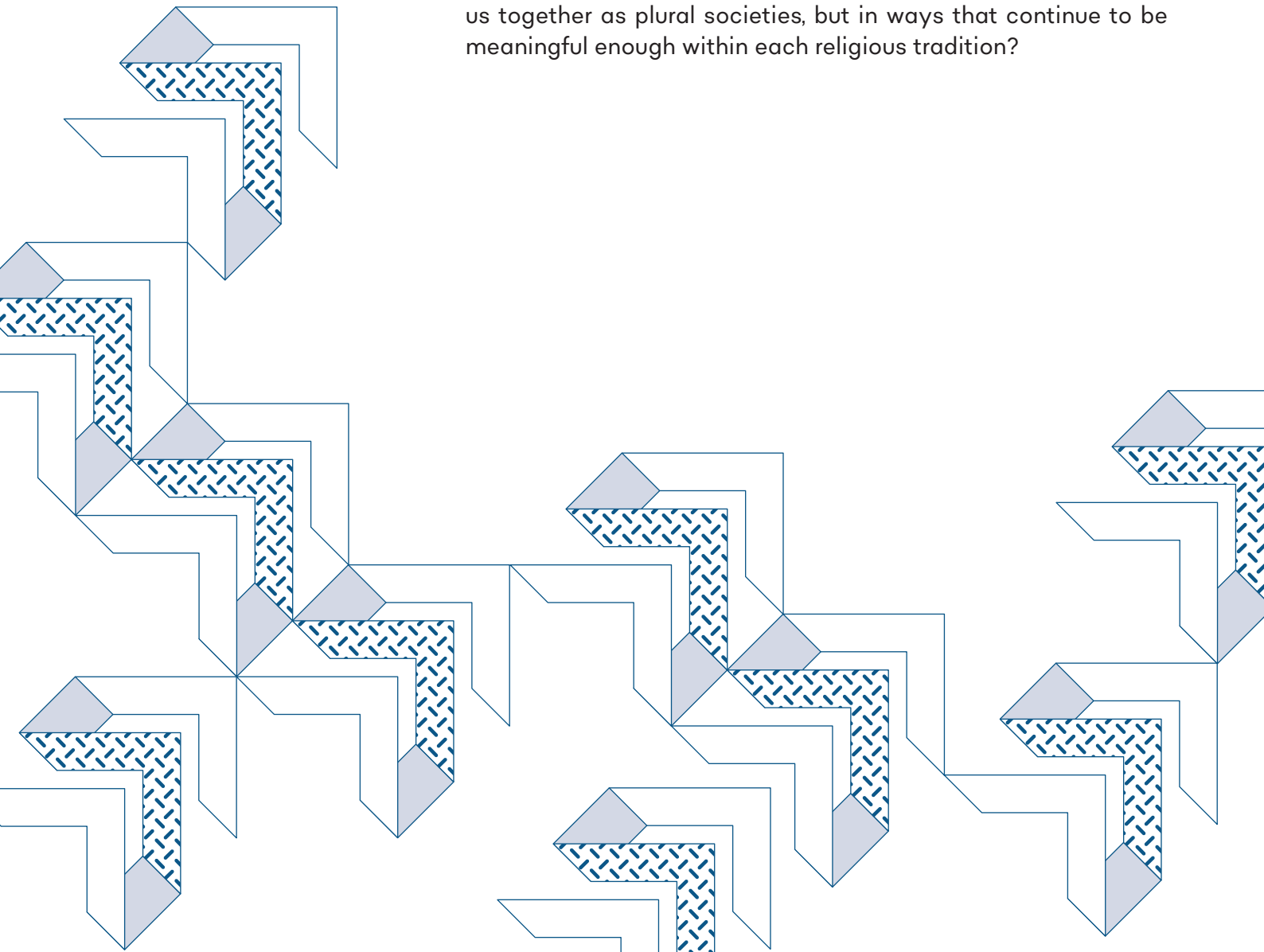


PANEL 2

Religious Values: Advancing Progressive Values for the Common Good

While religions are arguably typified by their exclusivity, in times of growing diversity and plurality, the ethics and theology of commonality and humanity are more needed than ever before. Restoring our shared humanity and the essence of our religions, which call for peace and conviviality, should be the main concern today, instead of accentuating differences. If human beings are meaning-seeking creatures, religions and religious pursuits are an endless quest for meanings and purposes, founded on the theology of humanity, mercy, compassion, justice and goodness. The Sharīah (Muslim jurisprudence) itself is founded upon virtues such as justice, mercy, goodness and wisdom.

In protecting and advocating our different traditions and customs, we celebrate the greatness and strength of our common humanity. Pride in one's culture should not be allowed to ignite prejudice, to encourage polarization between nations and cultures or to marginalize the 'other.' Instead, the focus is on enduring values that establish the common good and strengthen social cohesion, not in spite of, but because of, diversity. The objective is not to renegotiate one's religious values or principles (worldview), but rather to rethink the means and actions without compromising our religious values, principles and worldview. How then can religions deepen and enrich these values that hold us together as plural societies, but in ways that continue to be meaningful enough within each religious tradition?



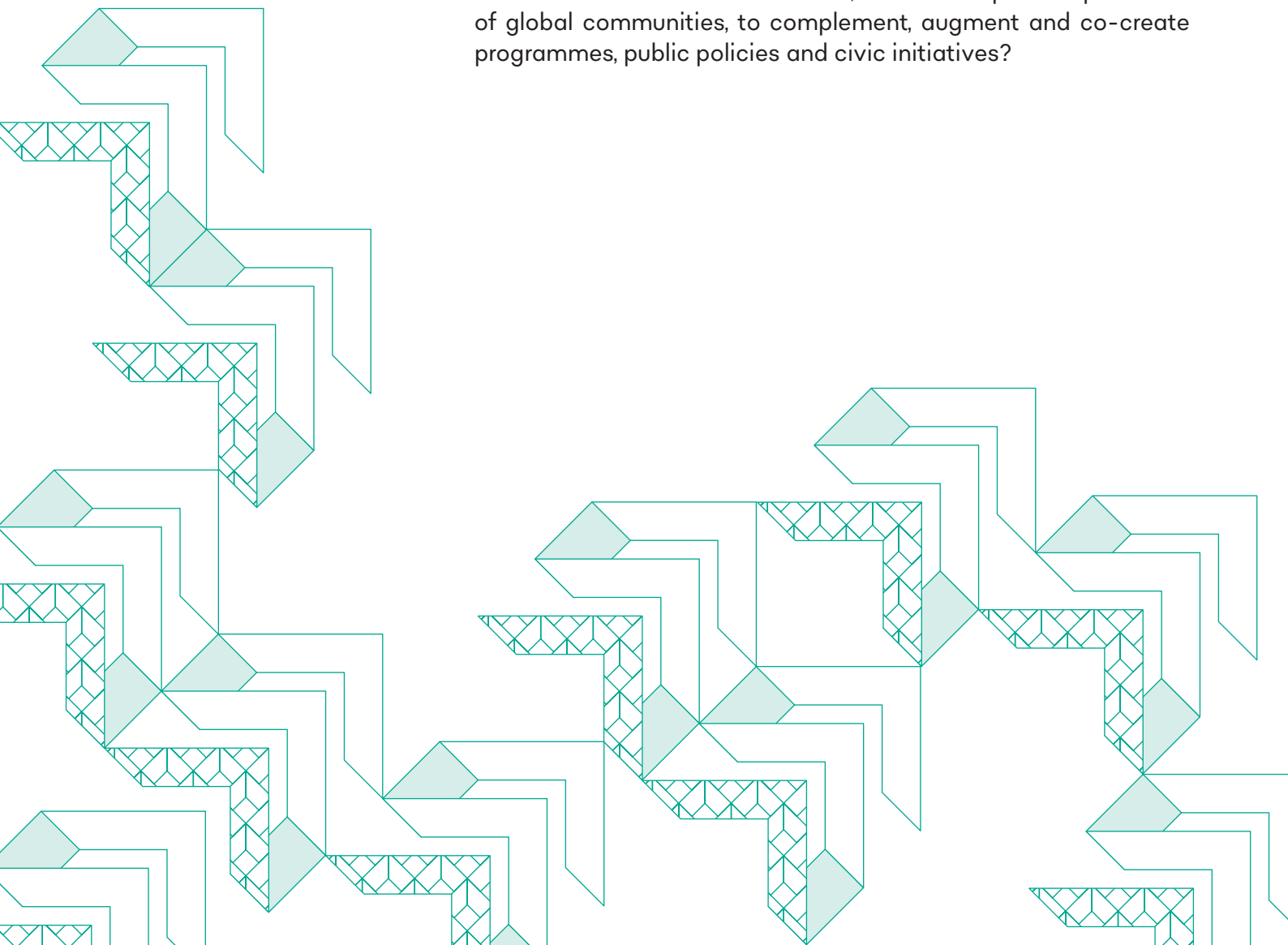


PANEL 3

Religious Institutions: Building Robust Religious Institutions for the Future

Religious values and traditions provide the altruistic motives for developing and strengthening of cohesive societies and compassionate and peaceful living that preserves human dignity and promotes common good. These values must form the bedrock of these plural societies, where the power of private morality is translated into the ethical life of the community that can positively transform the community. However, these ideals could not possibly happen by chance. These must be consciously and conscientiously cultivated, cultured and protected.

In a “post-truth” era and the pervasive influence of social media, religious institutions bear the added but challenging task to cultivate and nurture such ideals in a fractured world. This session calls for religious institutions and leaders to collectively formulate programmes and plans to promulgate progressive values and advocate compassionate living traditions. It calls for action in the form of strengthening our religious institutions into robust and well-prepared institutions to take on new challenges. To this end, the session will explore the following questions: What roles do religious institutions play in new and emerging socio-religious contexts? What could religious institutions offer, in practical terms, to fortify inclusive and cohesive societies and tighten the bonds of humanity? What are some of the best practices and lessons one can learn from the rich, diverse and plural experiences of global communities, to complement, augment and co-create programmes, public policies and civic initiatives?



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

The ICS2018 will be held over 2 days, with the keynote and presentations on the themes above held on the first day. The ICS2018 will feature an international group of eminent scholars and prominent global religious leaders who have contributed through ideas and leadership in building cohesive societies and strengthening religious ties. In addition to the pre-conference programmes over the last year, MUIS intends to extend the discussion further through post-conference programmes to facilitate deliberations and follow up on the ideas in the conference respectively.

DAY 1: Wednesday, 7 Nov 2018

8.55am	Opening Remarks by Emcee
9.00am	Welcome Remarks by Chief Executive of Muis
9.05am	MUIS50 Video “<i>Rahmah (Compassion)</i>”
9.15am	Keynote Address by Prime Minister of Singapore
9.30am	<p>Official Launch of MUIS50 Publication “<i>Thriving in a Plural World: Principles and Values of the Singapore Muslim Community</i>”</p> <p>The publication articulates anew the Singapore Muslim Identity (SMI), the religious values that underpin it and new horizons in the socio-religious life of Muslims. It calls for continued reflection and mindful action. It synthesizes key ideas generated from the various discourses organized by MUIS in shaping a Gracious Muslim Community of Excellence that inspires and radiates blessings to all. A community that thrives with diversity in developing a profound religious life and dynamic institutions. Furthermore, it postulates the way forward for a thriving religious community based on continued critical reflection and mindful civic engagement.</p>
10.00am	<p>Opening Address on “<i>The Role of Religion in A Global World: Contributions of Religious Communities in Nurturing the Common Good</i>”</p> <p>The role of religion has evidently become more relevant and essential in transforming complex socio-religious challenges into opportunities for civilizational growth. Religion should not only counter threats and address challenges reactively. Rather, it should strengthen community relations, negotiate lasting reconciliation efforts, revitalise the progressive religious discourse, nurture the common good and uphold human dignity proactively.</p> <p>H.E Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah will highlight the diverse contributions made by various religious communities in nurturing the common good. An inclusive and socially progressive religious community, not limited to any single religion, is a community that is beneficial to humanity. The future of faith rests on the parameters of the role of religion in public space and embracing the positive contributions of people of faith, particularly in revitalising the religious discourse that stirs humanity towards peace, harmony and interconnectivity and upholding human dignity.</p> <p>Addressed by: H.E. Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah, President of the Emirates Fatwa Council, UAE; President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, UAE</p>

10.30am	<p>Session 1: Enhancing Religious Life in Modern Plural Societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The central question is how do we continue to interpret and re-interpret these traditions critically and creatively in offering practical and viable solutions to modern challenges and problems? How do religious traditions nurture active citizenry and embrace inter and intra-faith diversities? ▶ How can religions accommodate changing social attitudes, beliefs, and changing socio-political realities? How can people of faith contribute positively to nurturing cohesive public life, common goods and shared interests? <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Abdullah Saeed, Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Melbourne, Australia 2. Professor Reuven Firestone, Regenstein Professor in Medieval Judaism and Islam, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, USA 3. Dr Roland Chia, Chew Hock Hin Professor of Christian Doctrine, Trinity Theological College, Singapore
2.00pm	<p>Session 2: Advancing Progressive Values for the Common Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How can we deepen and enrich the values that can hold us together as plural societies but continue to be meaningful enough within each religious tradition? ▶ What are the values unique to our context that may have a wider appeal globally? <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Ali Allawi, Advisor to the Iraqi government and parastatals 2. Professor Heidi Hadsell, Chair, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, United Presbyterian Church, USA 3. Dr Mathew Mathews, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies, LKYSPP, NUS
4.00pm	<p>Session 3: Building Robust Religious Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What roles do religious institutions play in these emerging socio-religious contexts? ▶ What could religious institutions offer, in practical terms, to fortify inclusive and cohesive societies and tighten the bonds of humanity? ▶ What are some of the best practices and lessons one can learn from the rich, diverse and plural experiences, to complement, augment and co-create programs, public policies and civic initiatives? <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Mohamad Elsanousi, Senior Director of Community Communication and Interfaith Relations, Islamic Society of North America, USA 2. Prof Dr M Din Syamsuddin, Professor on Islamic Political Thought at National Islamic University, Jakarta; Chairman, Advisory Council of Indonesian Council of Ulama 3. Ambassador Mohammad Alami Musa, Head of Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies Programme, RSIS, NTU, Singapore
5.30pm	Concluding Remarks
8.00pm	Official Welcome Dinner for Conference Speakers
End of Day One	

DAY 2: Thursday, 8 Nov 2018

9.30am	Opening Remarks by H.E Dr Mohammed Matar Salem bin Abid Al Kaabi, Secretary General, Forum for Promoting Peace; Chairman, General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments
9.40am	<p>Concluding Panel: Discussion on Issues and Solution-Making for the Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Synthesize input from the respective panels on current challenges and future trends. ▶ Offer helicopter view on the role of religious values in developing a progressive religious leadership and robust institutions capable of managing Muslim Communities of Excellence ▶ Propose a framework of progressive religious values that characterises Muslim Identities that thrive in the plural world. ▶ Shape the conference resolution. <p>Facilitators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Yaacob Ibrahim, Member of Parliament, Jalan Besar GRC; and former Minister for Communications and Information, Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs and Minister-in-Charge of Cyber Security. 2. Dr Basma Abdelgafar, Vice President, Maqasid Institute Global 3. Dr Nazirudin Mohd Nasir, Senior Director, Religious Policy and Development, MUIS, Singapore.
11.30am	Concluding Address by Mufti of Singapore, Dr Mohamed Fatris Bakaram on “Striving with Confidence, Serving with Compassion’: Nurturing Progressive Religious Life for the Future”
12.00pm	Closing Remarks
End of Conference	
8.00pm – 10.00pm	<p>MUIS50 Lecture on “Islam’s Universal Values for Humanity” By: Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Vice President, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Society</p> <p>In the increasingly diverse and global public sphere, religious values play a critical role in inspiring communities to contend with the challenges of modernity. Among the more pressing challenges is the need to integrate communities in a radically different and a creative way that appreciates the individual consciousness as an integral contribution to achieving the harmonious and collective good.</p> <p>The religious communities globally need to understand and apply their religious traditions profoundly in a way that is relevant to their needs, and that nurtures socially progressive principles. Such enduring values would ensure that religious communities navigate modernity safely while celebrating inclusivity and solidarity. This would be but a means to a practical end, which is to organise and thrive in diversity and to positively and collectively contribute to the sustainable common good.</p> <p>Shaykh Hamza will discuss the enduring values from the perspective of Islam projected onto the future. What would it take for a Muslim Community to not only be a positive source of strength, organizational excellence and social harmony, but also to inspire radical beauty, transformative action and global unity of diverse multicultural societies?</p>

SPEAKERS' PROFILES

OPENING ADDRESS



**H.E. Shaykh Abdallah
Bin Bayyah**

President of the Emirates Fatwa Council, UAE; President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, UAE.

HE Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah is recognised by Muslim scholars around the world as one of the greatest living authorities on the Islamic legal methodology known as Usul al-Fiqh (Principles of Jurisprudence). Beyond that, he is known for his scholarship drawing on scripture and traditional texts across all four major Sunni schools of jurisprudence to address the crucial contemporary concerns of Muslim communities. In recent years, he has been the driving force behind the establishment of the Forum for Peace, which seeks to unite Muslim scholars around the world in pursuit of peace, and to address the crises facing Islamic communities worldwide.

In his early 20s, he was selected as part of a group of scholars to go to Tunisia for training in modern legal systems, which were to be introduced to Mauritania. He became a judge and moved on to hold senior governmental positions, before leaving politics to devote his time to study and teaching.

The Shaykh has developed theories of Islamic jurisprudence in secular or non-Muslim societies, called the Jurisprudence of Minorities (fiqh al-aqalliyyat). He is also an outspoken critic of terrorism, authoring several articles and books exploring Islamic responses to the issue. The Shaykh's work has not been focused on scholarship for its own sake, but on applying it to address some of the most pressing issues facing global Islam.

In 2014, the Shaykh established the Forum for Peace (FFP) in Abu Dhabi, under the patronage of Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates. The vision of the FFP was to address the crises facing global Islam from a framework of Islamic tradition and legal theory, applied to local contexts. Over 1,000 of the world's leading Islamic scholars from a variety of traditions, as well as academics and thought leaders, attended the FFP's launch. The FFP is the first global gathering of scholars designed to provide a response to extremism, sectarianism and terrorism.

In January 2016, the Shaykh convened the Marrakesh Declaration, as the culmination of an effort running since 2011 to address the issue of violence and oppression against minorities in Muslim majority countries. The Declaration applied traditional Islamic texts, and in particular the Prophet Muhammad's Charter of Medina, to affirm the Islamic principle of equal citizenship as prescribed by the Prophet. It was signed by scholars and politicians from across the Muslim world.

SPEAKERS' PROFILES

CONCLUDING ADDRESS

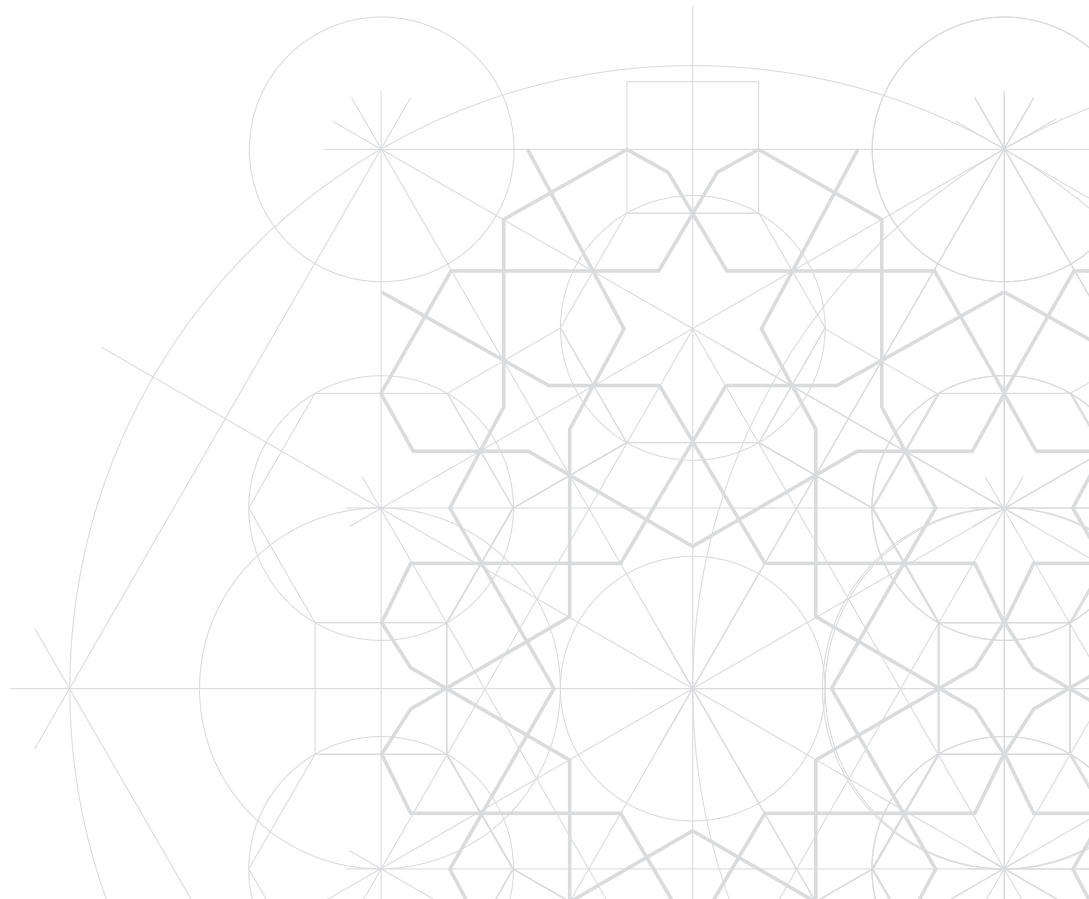


Dr Mohamed Fatris Bakaram

Mufti, Republic of Singapore.

Dr Mohamed Fatris is a trained Islamic scholar who has studied the Arabic language and various other Islamic sciences. He received his early education at Madrasah Aljunied Al-Islamiah, Singapore before continuing his tertiary education at the Al-Azhar University, Egypt, majoring in theology. He holds a Master's degree in Education from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and a Doctoral degree in Islamic Studies from Birmingham University, UK.

Prior to his appointment as Mufti of Singapore, he was the Principal of Madrasah al Irsyad al-Islamiah in Singapore, and Director of the Office of the Mufti at the Islamic Council of Singapore (MUIS). His other involvement included serving as Chairman of Fatwa Council of Singapore, Deputy President of the Association of Islamic Scholars and Religious Teachers (PERGAS) member of the Appeal Board for the Syariah Court of Singapore, the Board of Trustees of The Forum For Peace, the Presidential Council for Religious Harmony (PCRH), and the Board of Governors of Madrasah Aljunied Al-Islamiah. He is also a member of the Senior Council of Elders (Masyaikh) of the Singapore Islamic Scholars and Religious Teachers Association (PERGAS).



PANEL 1: ENHANCING RELIGIOUS LIFE IN MODERN PLURAL SOCIETIES



Dr Reuven Firestone

Regenstein Professor in Medieval Judaism and Islam; Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, USA and Affiliate Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California, USA.

Recipient of numerous research fellowships and university invitations, he is currently an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellow in Berlin (summers, 2017-2019) and Sigi Feigel Visiting Professorship for Jewish Studies, University of Zürich (2018).

Professor Firestone has written over one hundred scholarly chapters and articles and eight books, on Judaism, Islam, their relationship with one another and with Christianity, and phenomenology of religion. His works has been translations into German, French, Hebrew, Turkish, Arabic, Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian, Indonesian and Urdu.

He is active on the boards of numerous scholarly journals and boards and commissions treating interreligious relations and dialogue. An ordained rabbi, Firestone received his Ph.D. in Arabic and Islamic Studies from New York University, and has served as Vice President for Program of the Association for Jewish Studies and President of the International Qur'anic Studies Association. He initiated and continues to be involved in numerous interfaith projects and initiatives which bring together Jews, Muslims and Christians; Jews and Arabs; and Israelis and Palestinians.



Dr Roland Chia

Chew Hock Hin Professor of Christian Doctrine, Trinity Theological College, Singapore.

Member of the panel of Global Experts of the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations, he speaks at the UN Conferences on Bioethics, Human Rights and Social Justice. He currently serves as consulting editor of the multi-volume Encyclopaedia of Global Bioethics.

Dr Chia is a lay theologian with the Methodist Church of Singapore. He speaks regularly at churches across the denominations in Singapore. He has also conducted seminars and delivered talks in churches in Malaysia, Indonesia and India. He has been contributing a monthly article to the *Methodist Message* since 1998.

Dr Chia has participated in a number of interfaith collaborations, especially with the Muslim community in Singapore. In 2005, he jointly organised a conference on public morality with the Association of Muslim Professionals. In 2007, he delivered a paper at the Building Bridges Seminar, Singapore chaired by Archbishop Rowan Williams. He jointly organized a seminar series on Postmodernism with MUIS. Furthermore, he has participated in a number of Science and Religion conferences organised by the Templeton Foundation.

PANEL 1: ENHANCING RELIGIOUS LIFE IN MODERN PLURAL SOCIETIES



Professor Abdullah Saeed

Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies; Director, National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, University of Melbourne, Australia; Visiting Peter Lim Professor of Peace Studies; Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU, Singapore.

His research focus is on one of the key areas of Islamic thought today: the negotiation of text and context, *ijtihad* and interpretation. Among his key publications are: *Islam and Human Rights* (Edward Elgar, 2018); *Reading the Qur'an in the Twenty-First Century* (Routledge, 2014); *Islamic Political Thought and Governance* (Routledge, edited, 2011); *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (Routledge, 2008); *Islamic Thought* (Routledge, 2006); *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (Routledge, 2006); *Approaches to the Qur'an in Contemporary Indonesia* (Oxford University Press, 2005); *Freedom of Religion and Apostasy in Islam* (Ashgate Publishing 2004); *Islam in Australia* (Allen & Unwin, 2002); and *Islamic Banking and Interest* (EJ Brill, 1996)

For his contributions to the development of Islamic studies and interfaith activities in Australia, he was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in 2013.



PANEL 2: ADVANCING PROGRESSIVE VALUES FOR THE COMMON GOOD



Professor Ali Allawi

Advisor to the Iraqi government and parastatals & Former Minister of Defence and Minister of Finance, Republic of Iraq.

Recipient of several international awards including, Tufts Award for World Diplomacy (2007), Nanyang Technological University Award (2009), and an Honorary Professorship from Beloit College (2010), he was elected as fourth most influential thinker in the world in 2013 by an independent international committee formed by Prospect Magazine.

Professor Allawi authored several books, including *The Occupation of Iraq* (2007), *The Crisis of Islamic Civilization* (2009), and *Faisal I of Iraq* (2014). In addition, in 2007 the Independent newspaper published his blueprint for Peace in Iraq. *The Manifesto* (2017) is a public declaration signed by dozens of intellectuals, writers, and political and business leaders, outlining principles for the economic and social transformation of Iraq.

He was served as Minister of Trade, Defense, and Finance, Iraq in 2003 and took part in establishing several international banking and investment companies and worked for the World Bank as a Finance and Investment expert. He was a research professor at the National University of Singapore and was a visiting Professor at the Universities of NTU, Harvard, Princeton and Oxford.



Professor Heidi Hadsell

Chair, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, United Presbyterian Church, USA.

Professor Hadsell's lifelong career has strongly focused on building common ground between different strands of Christianity (Ecumenical relations) and later between different strands of faith traditions (interfaith relations). Her interest in Ethics, be it Christian or Global underpins most of her work. She was President of Hartford Seminary for 18 years, where she taught courses in Global Ethics, Interfaith Dialogue, and Christian Ethics. She retired at the end of June, 2018. She is currently living in Berkeley, California where she is active in a number of organizations and committees that are national and international and also inter-religious.

Her publications include the edited book on interfaith teaching entitled "*Changing the Way Seminaries Teach*." She is currently co-editing another book on teaching inter-religious (or interfaith) relations entitled "*Experiments in Empathy for our Time: Reflections on Interreligious Learning*."

PANEL 2: ADVANCING PROGRESSIVE VALUES FOR THE COMMON GOOD



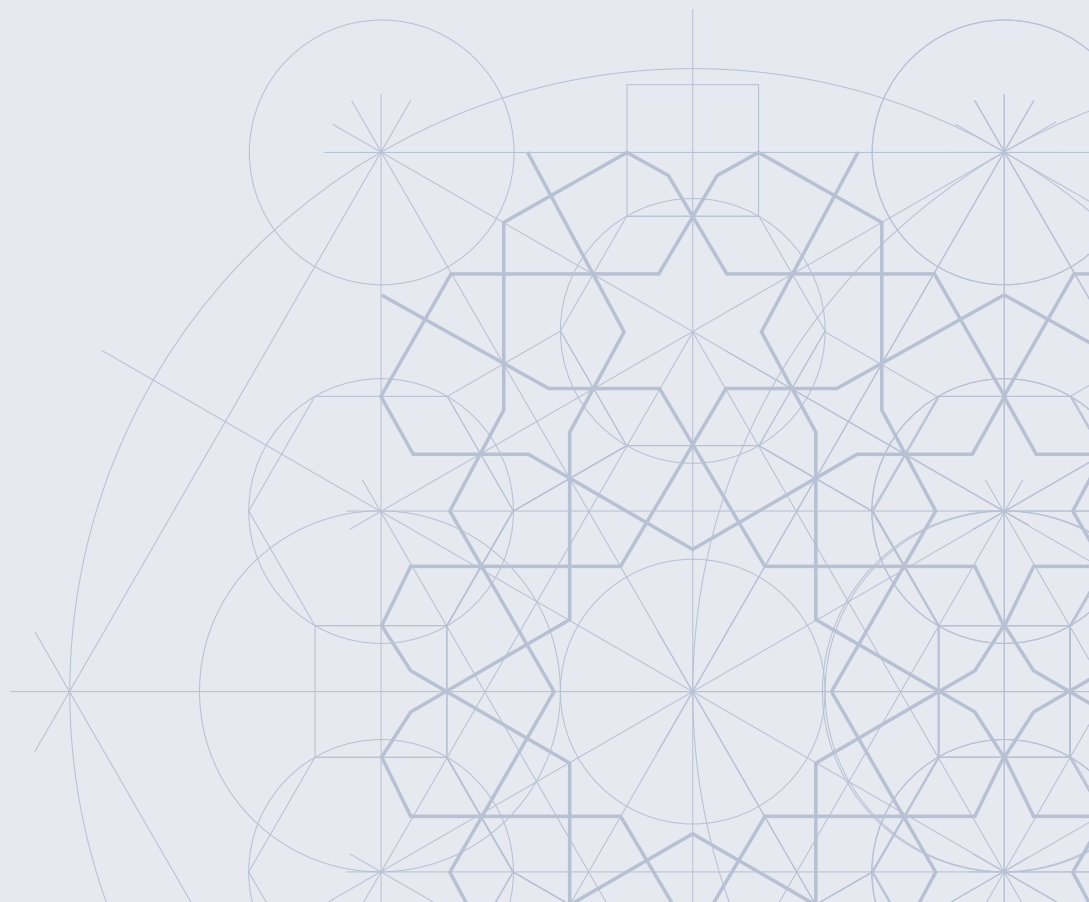
Dr Mathew Mathews

Senior Research Fellow,
Institute of Policy Studies at
LKYSPP, NUS.

Dr Mathews leads the *Society and Identity* research cluster where he examines issues surrounding societal cohesion. His research includes those on race, religion, immigrant integration, family, ageing and poverty.

Mathews is also interested in the impact of social programmes on societal concerns and has been involved in a number of evaluations on the usefulness of various government initiatives. Dr Mathews has taught various courses relating to social policy and has published in a range of academic outlets. He is currently on the editorial advisory board of the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* and has served on various government and non-governmental boards and communities.

He is President of Alive Community Network and sits on the advisory boards of OnePeople.sg and Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing. He also is a Research Advisor to the Ministry of Social and Family Development and is part of the VWOs-Charities Capability Fund Panel.



PANEL 3: BUILDING ROBUST RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE



Dr Mohamed Elsanousi

Member, Board of Trustees, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies; Senior Director, Community Communication and Interfaith Relations, Islamic Society of North America, USA.

Dr Elsanousi is the Executive Director of the Secretariat of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, a global network initiated by United Nations Mediation Support Unit, UN Alliance of Civilizations, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Religions for Peace, KAICIID Dialogue Center and Finn Church Aid.

Dr Elsanousi is an advisor to a number of government agencies and national and international interfaith institutions on matter related to religion and peacebuilding. He served on the Core Group Taskforce for the Department of State's working group on Religion and Foreign Policy under Secretary Clinton and Kerry, charged with making recommendations to the Secretary of State and the Federal Advisory Commission on how the US government can better engage with civil society and religious actors in foreign policy.

Dr Elsanousi is the Founding co-chair of Shoulder to Shoulder, and serves on the board of directors and advisors for numerous interfaith organizations, including the Advisory Board of Louis Finkelstein Institute and Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, member of the Advisor Committee for the United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide and Responsibility to Protect and a trustee for the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies and the Parliament of the World's Religions.



Prof Dr M Din Syamsuddin

Professor on Islamic Political Thought at National Islamic University, Jakarta; Chairman, Advisory Council of Indonesian Council of Ulama.

Recipient of the Doctor Honoris Causa on Islamic Philosophy, Fatoni University, Thailand (2017), Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation Award (2016), & Lifetime Achievement Awards by the World Chinese Economic Forum (2014), he is dedicated to interfaith and intercultural dialogue, intent on building peace and social harmony in the midst diversity and harnessing religious principles to find solutions to common challenges, such as environmentalism.

He contributes to various other international organizations including the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Salam Messaging Centre, Member of Leadership Council, United Nations-Sustainable Development Solutions Network, King Abdulaziz Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID), Saudi Arabia, Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, Jordan, and UK-Indonesia Islamic Advisory Group. He is also Chairman, Centre for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilization, Indonesia, President-Moderator, Asian Conference of Religions for Peace, Japan, Co-President, World Conference of Religions for Peace (USA), Chairman, World Peace Forum & Chairman Indonesia's Movement to Save Earth, Indonesia.

PANEL 3: BUILDING ROBUST RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

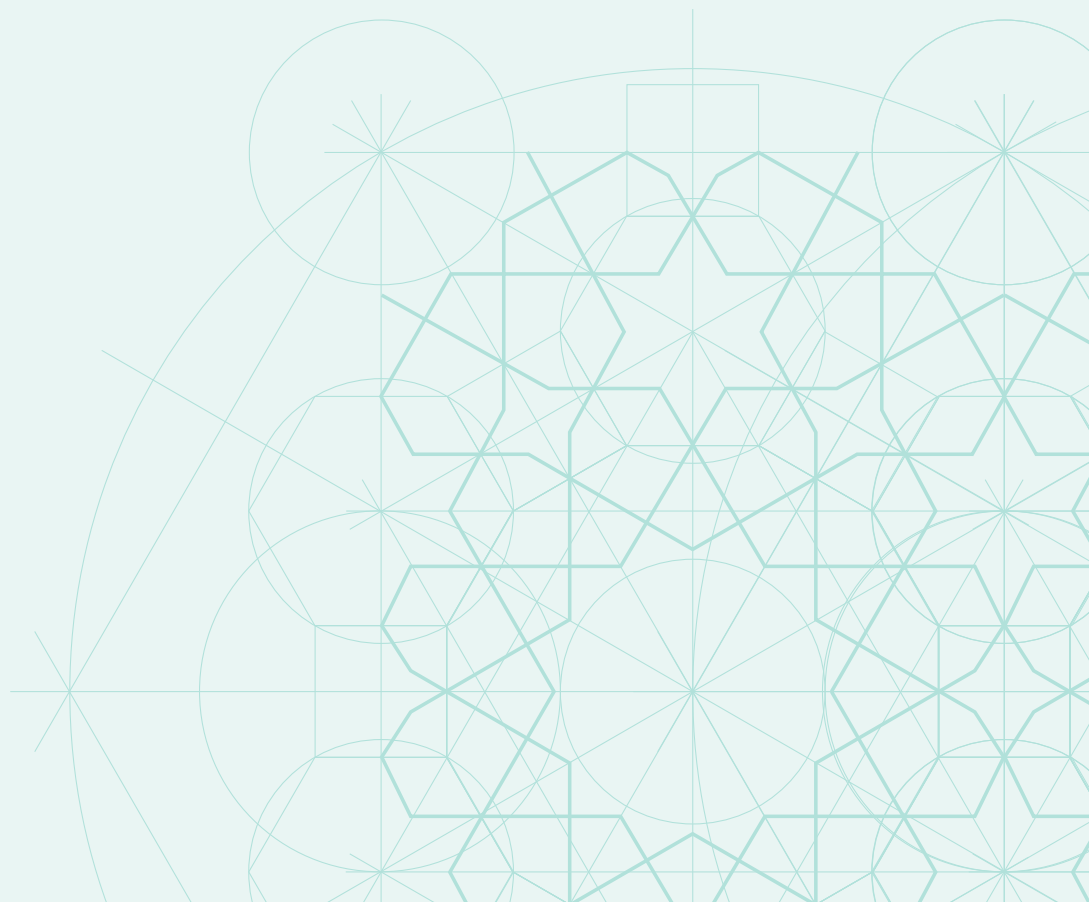


Ambassador Mohammad Alami Musa

Head of Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme; President, Islamic Religious Council of Singapore & Singapore's Non-Resident Ambassador to Algeria.

Recipient of the Berita Harian's "Achiever of the Year" award (2015), Meritorious Service Medal (2015), the Public Administration Medal (Silver) (2010) & the Long Service Medal (2005) he was appointed Justice of Peace in 2015. He has dedicated his long and illustrious career to the development of the Muslim Community and building social harmony and cohesion.

As a keen observer of Muslim development in multi-cultural societies, he was deeply involved in the Singapore Muslim Identity project, conceptualising, developing, writing and presenting seminars about the issue of identity of minority Muslim community in a secular, multi-religious and culturally diverse society. He is an active promoter of positive inter religious relations in Singapore and the region. He was involved in the research on Islam and its relations with other religions and the Religious Other. Regionally, Amb Alami was instrumental to start up efforts to promote Inter-Religious Relations.



CONCLUDING PANEL: SENSE AND SOLUTION-MAKING FOR THE FUTURE



Professor Yaacob Ibrahim

Member of Parliament, Jalan Besar GRC; and former Minister for Communications and Information, Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs and Minister-in-Charge of Cyber Security.

Professor Yaacob Ibrahim is currently Advisor to the President of Singapore Institute of Technology. He has held several ministerial positions previously in areas such as sports, community development, environment, water resources, communications, information, cyber security and Muslim affairs.

While Professor Yaacob Ibrahim was Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs between 2002 to 2018, he looked after the religious needs of Singapore Muslims. Under his leadership, Prof Yaacob supported the articulation of the Singapore Muslim Identity, a set of inclusive and adaptive values for the practice of Islam in a multiracial and multi-religious society. He made lasting contribution to the institutionalization of religious life of the Muslim community. Muis Academy was set up and held the Muis Lecture Series inviting distinguished international religious scholars to present their perspectives and broaden our knowledge on Islam in the Modern World. The madrasahs were consolidated under the Joint Madrasah System to offer an integrated curriculum and Muis implemented an Asatizah Recognition Scheme to accredit qualified Islamic teachers and scholars. He launched the Mosque Upgrading programme, which refreshed older mosques, expanded prayer spaces and opened up barrier free access for congregants. He also oversaw haj and korban operations to ensure the fulfilment of Islamic religious obligations.

Professor Yaacob graduated from the University of Singapore with honours degree in Civil Engineering. He obtained his Phd from Stanford University, and did his postdoctorate at Cornell University before returning to Singapore in 1990 and joined the National University of Singapore.

CONCLUDING PANEL: SENSE AND SOLUTION-MAKING FOR THE FUTURE



Dr Basma Abdelgafar

*Vice President, Maqasid
Institute Global.*

Basma obtained her Ph.D. in Public Policy from Carleton University, Ottawa, in 2003. Her prior studies include a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Master of Public Administration from the American University in Cairo. She has been awarded several prestigious international and national scholarships and fellowships.

Dr Basma has worked in government, academia and the third sector. She is founding member of the Public Policy in Islam Masters Program at Qatar Foundation where she spent five years developing, teaching and heading the program. Other positions have included Specialist Advisor, Canadian International Development Agency; Policy Analyst in the Canadian Federal Government; and Research Associate at Carleton University and the University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics.

Her early research focused on intellectual property rights, innovation systems, and the pharmaceutical industries particularly of developing countries. For the past decade she has taken a keen interest in public policy and governance in the Quran and Sunnah as well as in Muslim history, thought, institutions and communities. She has also written on Islamic morality and the contribution of the late esteemed scholar Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah Draz. Her most recent work on the Higher Objectives of Shariah and Public Policy in Islam is currently in the publication process.



Dr Nazirudin Mohd Nasir

*Senior Director, Religious and
Policy Development at the Islamic
Religious Council of Singapore
(MUIS).*

He is a member of the Bioethics Advisory Committee of Singapore and serves on the Panel of Community Advisors for Honour Singapore. He has also served as a member of the 9th Singapore-India Strategic Dialogue.

Trained in Islamic law at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Dr Nazirudin graduated with an MA in comparative legal studies with distinction as a Chevening scholar at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. At the University of Oxford, Dr Nazirudin completed an M.St in the Study of Religion and was awarded with a doctoral studentship in the Study of the Abrahamic Religions by the Faculty of Theology. He completed his D.Phil at St Cross College in the comparative study of the Abrahamic religions. He is an associate faculty member of the Singapore University of Social Sciences, and speaks regularly in seminars and conferences on contemporary issues on religion and society.

MUIS50 LECTURE: ISLAM'S UNIVERSAL VALUES FOR HUMANITY



Shaykh Hamza Yusuf

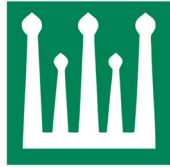
Vice President, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, UAE; President of Zaytuna College, USA; and Advisor, Center for Islamic Studies at Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union, USA

Hamza Yusuf became Muslim in 1977 and subsequently spent ten years studying in the U.A.E., Saudi Arabia, as well as North and West Africa. He received teaching licenses in various Islamic subjects from well-known scholars in various countries. In the United States, Yusuf obtained degrees in Religious Studies and Health Care.

After years of teaching and community development work, Yusuf founded Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, America's first accredited Muslim liberal arts college. He serves as president and senior faculty member, and under his leadership, Zaytuna College is now globally recognized as one of the leading Muslim higher education institutions in the West. Yusuf is also an advisor to the Center for Islamic Studies at Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union. He serves as vice president for the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies (Abu Dhabi), which was founded and is currently presided over by Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah, a world-renowned Muslim scholar and jurist. In addition, Yusuf has joined the Emirates Fatwa Council under the leadership of Shaykh Abdallah.

For almost a decade, Yusuf has been consecutively ranked as "The Western World's most influential Islamic scholar" by *The 500 Most Influential Muslims*, edited by John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin. He is one of the leading proponents of classical learning in Islam and has promoted Islamic sciences and classical teaching methodologies throughout the world. Hamza Yusuf's contribution to the development of Islam in the United Kingdom has been described as "immense" and "considerable," by the academic Haifaa Jawad in her recent book, *Towards Building a British Islam*.

Yusuf has also authored several encyclopaedia articles and research papers. His published books include *The Burda* (2003), *Purification of the Heart* (2004), *The Content of Character* (2004), *The Creed of Imam al-Tahawi* (2007), *Agenda to Change our Condition* (2007), *Walk on Water* (2010), and *The Prayer of the Oppressed* (2010). His forthcoming books include texts on theology, jurisprudence, and character development.



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura
(Islamic Religious Council of Singapore)



ABOUT ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF SINGAPORE (MUIS)

The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and comes under the direct purview of the Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs. MUIS's main role is to advise the Singapore Government on all matters pertaining to Islamic affairs in Singapore and to manage all aspects of religious life of the Singapore Muslim Community.

Its aim is to establish a Muslim community of excellence that is religiously profound and socially progressive, and that thrives in a multi-religious society, secular state and globalised world. Its priority is to set the Islamic Agenda, shape Religious Life and forge a Singapore Muslim Identity, that is progressive, inclusive, adaptive and contributive. It champions forward-looking discourse in Islam and promotes interfaith understanding through community engagement initiatives to enhance the social cohesion and well-being of the nation.

ABOUT MUIS50

On 1 July 2018, MUIS marked its 50th anniversary. The achievements of the past 50 years would not have been possible without the rigorous and progressive vision of religious thought leadership and scholarship. With visionary leadership, MUIS was able to fulfil its trust in enhancing the religious life of Muslims. There has been a lot of changes in the past 50 years and the future, with its accelerating speed of change requires the community to proactively anticipate emerging needs and be nimble and quick to think and act boldly and creatively. Transforming MUIS's approach to serving the community is necessary to ensure that the community is able to contribute to the development of a progressive religious discourse in, and beyond Singapore.



ABOUT THE FORUM FOR PROMOTING PEACE

The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies was set up in March 2014 in order to address the rising and widespread discord in Muslim Societies around the world, under the leadership of H.E. Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah and the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, the UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

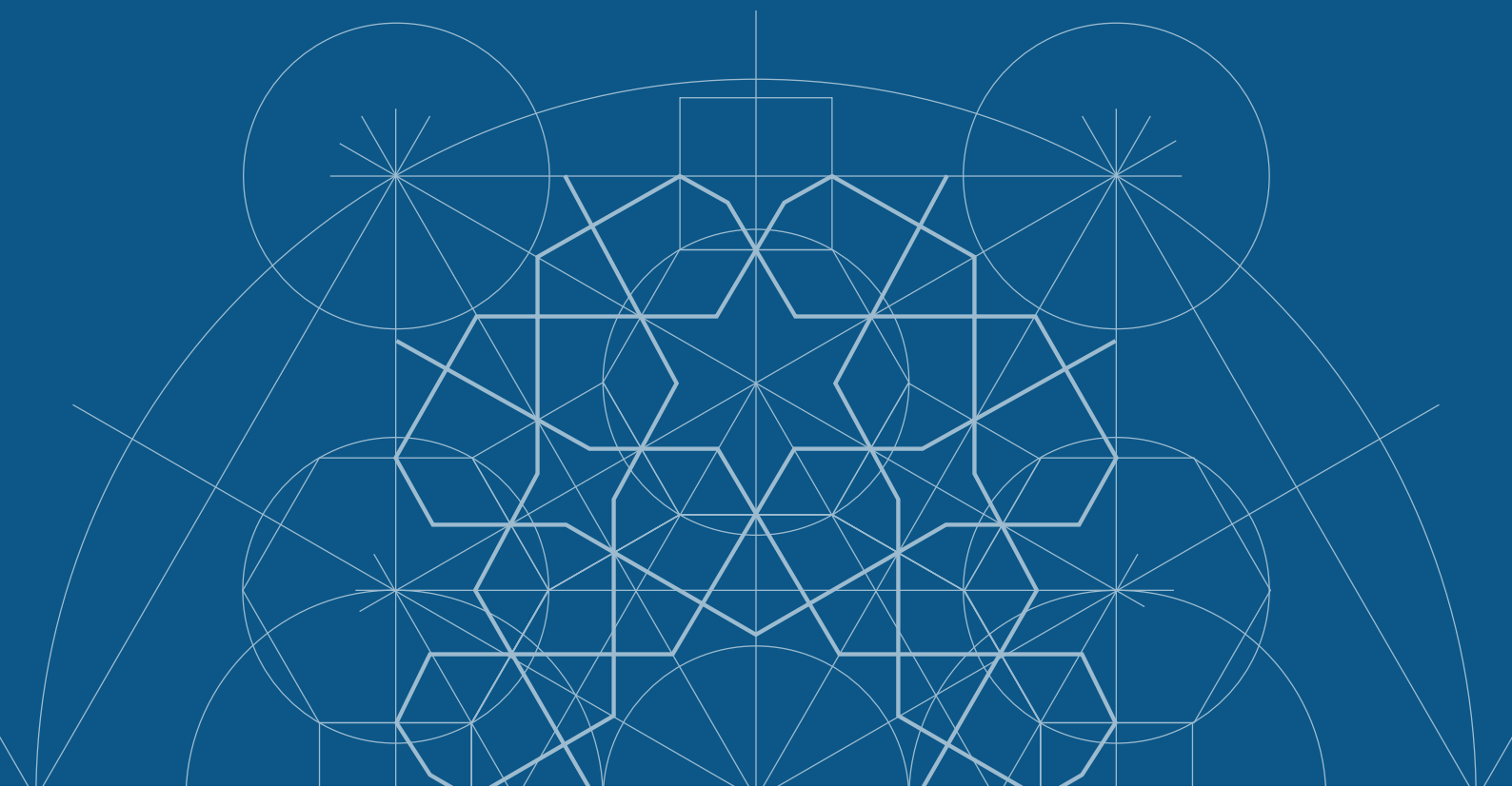
From its foundation, the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies has sought to educate and equip Islamic leaders around the world to apply Islamic principles and theological reasoning to the contemporary issues facing their congregations, and in particular, to undermine the appeal of the religious extremism.

The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies is the culmination of the H.E. Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah's work, as one of the few living scholars to have mastered all four Sunni Madhabs (schools of jurisprudence). This allows him to combine the study of the scriptural sources of Quran and Hadith, the various schools' approaches to Usul al-Fiqh (the theoretical foundations of jurisprudence), and Maqasid al-Shariah (the purposes of Islamic law). This

breadth of study has allowed the Shaykh to develop a universal framework in which Islamic jurisprudence can be adapted to local contexts while maintaining its essential principles and purposes and ensuring its continued relevance in the lives of an increasingly diverse global Muslim population.

Such a goal cannot be achieved in isolation. As Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah said at its inaugural meeting in 2014, "Our call is a call to life, a call to peace, a call to fraternity and affinity, a call to human dignity wherever men meet. We seek lovers of truth, that is people of insight and discernment, so that we may together form an alliance of virtue." The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies was established as a home for all those who share its ambitions, and hundreds of leaders and scholars from across the world have participated in its activities.

The most significant of the Forum for Promoting Peace's activities so far was the Marrakech Declaration of 2016: a statement signed by global leaders agreeing to a legal framework to secure the rights of minorities in Muslim majority societies. For achievements such as the Marrakech Declaration, the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies has been praised by former President of the United States, Barack Obama, and His Majesty King Mohamed VI of Morocco.



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