

INTERNATIONAL PEACE

The Devastating Consequences of a Nuclear
War and the Critical Need for Absolute Justice

The 9th Annual Peace Symposium

24th March 2012

Baitul Futuh Mosque, London



An Overview of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community is a religious organisation, with branches in more than 193 countries. It is the most dynamic denomination of Islam in modern history, with an estimated membership of one hundred and sixty million worldwide.

It was established by **Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad** (1835-1908) in 1889 in a small and remote village called Qadian in Punjab, India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days and the awaited one of the world community of religions (the *Mahdi* and Messiah of the latter days). The community he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam in its pristine purity that promotes peace and universal brotherhood based on a belief in the Gracious and Ever-Merciful God.

With this conviction, within a century, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community has expanded globally and it endeavours to practice the peaceful teachings of Islam by raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for charities, building schools and hospitals open to all and by encouraging learning through interfaith dialogue.

The UK chapter of the community was established in 1913 and in 1924 it built London's first purpose built mosque (in Putney). It is therefore one of the oldest and most established Muslim organisations in Britain and now has more than 90 branches across Britain.



The Khalifa: A Man of Peace

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad was elected as the fifth Khalifa of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 2003.

His life has been a reflection of dedication, steadfastness, prayer and success. His bond with God leads him to urge his community never to forget the Almighty and never to despair. His focus on prayer is evident for all to see and the fruits of the success of such prayer bear testament to his faith. His sympathy for mankind drives him and his community to serve humanity in the same spirit that the early Muslims served the poor and the needy. His sense of sacrifice mirrors the spirit of sacrifice integral to Islam. Indeed his very life and mission reflect a pure spirit that is ever wary of its responsibilities and ever vigilant for the honour of Islam, its Prophet^(saw) and the prophet of the latter days.

“His Holiness eloquently and persistently returns to these themes of peace and tolerance love and understanding among the followers of different faiths...”

...We desperately need the moral leadership and guidance that we can look for to His Holiness to provide...”

(Lord Avebury on Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad)

The community stands at one with the Khalifa in the remembrance of God and service of mankind.



International Peace

On 24th March 2012, the 9th Annual Peace Symposium was held at the Baitul Futuh Mosque in Morden – the largest Mosque in Western Europe – organised by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the UK.

The event attracted an audience of more than 1000 people, including government ministers, ambassadors of state, members of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the Mayor of London, various other dignitaries, professionals, neighbours and guests from all walks of life. The theme of this year's Symposium was 'International Peace'. The keynote address was delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

The Devastating Consequences of a Nuclear War and the Critical Need for Absolute Justice

After reciting *Tashhahud*, *Ta'awwudh* and *Bismillah*, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^(aba) said:

“All our guests, *Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barakatohu* – peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

Today, after a period of one year, I once again have the opportunity to welcome all of our distinguished guests to this event. I am extremely grateful to all of you, as you have spared your time to come and attend today.

Indeed, most of you are well acquainted with this event which has come to be known as the ‘Peace Symposium’. This event is organised each year by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and is just one of our many efforts to try and fulfil our desire for peace to be established in the world.

In attendance today are some new friends, who are attending this function for the first time, whilst others are old friends who have supported our efforts for many years. Regardless, all of you are well-educated and share our desire for peace to be established in the world, and it is due to this desire that you are all attending this event.

All of you are here today with the heartfelt wish that the world comes to be filled with love, affection and friendship. It is this very attitude and these very values that the vast majority of the world longs for and which it stands in need of. In view of all of this, these are the reasons why all of you, who come from different backgrounds, nations and religions, are sitting in front of me today.

As I have said, we hold this conference each year and on each occasion, the same sentiment and hope is expressed by all of us, which is that peace in the world comes to be established before our very eyes; and so each year I also request all of you to endeavour to promote peace wherever you have the opportunity

and with whoever you have contact. Furthermore, I also request all those who are linked to political parties or governments that they should also convey this message of peace within their circles of influence. It is essential that everyone is made aware that, for the establishment of world peace, there is a far greater need for high and principled moral values than ever before.

As far as the Ahmadiyya Community is concerned, wherever and whenever the opportunity arises, we openly express and declare our view that there is only one way to save the world from the destruction and devastation that it is heading towards, and that is that we must all endeavour to spread love, affection and a sense of community. Most importantly, the world must come to recognise its Creator, Who is the One God. This is because it is the recognition of the Creator that leads us towards love and compassion for His Creation, and when this becomes part of our character, it is then that we become recipients of God’s Love.

We constantly raise our voice calling for peace in the world, and it is the pain and anguish we feel in our hearts that inspires us to try and alleviate the suffering of mankind and to make the world we live in a better place. Indeed, this very function is just one of our many efforts towards achieving this goal.

As I have already said, all of you also hold these noble desires. Furthermore, I have repeatedly called on politicians and religious leaders to strive for peace. Yet, in spite of all of these efforts, we find that anxiety and turmoil continue to spread and increase throughout the world. In today’s world we find so much strife, restlessness and disorder. In some countries members of the public are fighting and waging wars amongst themselves. In some nations the public is fighting against the government, or conversely the rulers are attacking their own people. Terrorist groups are fuelling anarchy and disorder to

fulfil their vested interests and so they are arbitrarily killing innocent women, children and the elderly. In some countries, as a means to fulfil their own interests, political parties are warring with each other rather than coming together for the betterment of their nations. We also find some governments and countries are continuously casting their glances enviously in the direction of the resources of other nations. The major powers of the world are consumed by their efforts to maintain their supremacy, and leave no stone unturned in their efforts towards pursuing this goal.

Bearing all of this in mind, we find that neither the Ahmadiyya Community nor the majority of you, who are members of the public, have the power or authority to develop policies to bring positive change. This is because we do not hold any governmental power or office. In fact, I would go as far as to say that even the politicians, with whom we have developed friendly relations and who always agree with us when they are in our company, are also unable to speak out. Instead, their voices too are being drowned out and they are prevented from forwarding their views. This is either because they are forced to follow party policies, or perhaps due to external pressures from other world powers or political allies, which are weighing them down.

Nevertheless, we, who take part in this Peace Symposium each year, undoubtedly hold a desire for peace to be established and certainly we express our opinions and feelings that love, compassion and brotherhood should be established amongst all religions, all nationalities, all races and indeed, amongst all people. Unfortunately though, we are powerless to actually bring this vision to light. We do not have the authority or means to achieve the results that we long for.

I recall that a couple of years ago, in this very hall during our Peace Symposium, I delivered a speech detailing the ways and means for world peace to be established, and I also spoke about how the United Nations ought to function. Afterwards, our very dear and respected friend, Lord Eric Avebury, commented that the speech ought to have been delivered at the United Nations itself. Nevertheless, this was a display of his noble character that he was so generous and kind in his remarks. However, what I wish to say is that merely delivering or listening to a speech or lecture is not enough and will not lead to peace being

established. In fact, the key requirement to fulfilling this primary goal is absolute justice and fairness in all matters. The Holy Qur'an, in Chapter 4, Verse 136, has given us a golden principle and lesson, guiding us about this. It states that as a means to fulfil the requirements of justice, even if you have to bear witness and testify against yourself, your parents or your closest relatives and friends, then you must do so. This is true justice where personal interests are set aside for the common good.

If we think about this principle at a collective level, then we will realise that unfair lobbying techniques based on wealth and influence should be abandoned. Instead, the representatives and ambassadors of each nation should come forward with sincerity and with a desire to support the principles of fairness and equality. We must eliminate all forms of bias and discrimination, as this is the only means to bring about peace. If we look at the United Nations General Assembly or Security Council, we find that often statements or speeches made there receive great praise and acknowledgement, but such tributes are meaningless because the real decisions have already been predetermined.

Thus, where decisions are made on the basis of the pressure or the lobbying of the major powers, as opposed to just and truly democratic means, then such speeches are rendered hollow, meaningless and serve only as pretence to deceive the outside world. Nevertheless, all of this does not mean that we should simply become frustrated, and give up and abandon all our efforts. Instead, it should be our objective, whilst remaining within the laws of the land, to continue to remind the government of the needs of the time. We must also properly advise those groups who have vested interests, so that at a global level, justice can prevail. Only then will we see the world become the haven of peace and harmony that we all want and desire.

Therefore, we cannot and must not give up our efforts. If we stop raising our voices against cruelty and injustice, then we will become amongst those who have no moral values or standards whatsoever. Whether or not our voices are likely to be heard or have influence is irrelevant. We must continue to counsel others towards peace. I am always extremely pleased when I see that, irrespective of differences of religion or nationality, for the sake of upholding human values, so many people come to this function

to listen, to learn and to speak about ways to establish peace and compassion in the world. Thus, I would request all of you to strive for peace to the best of your abilities so that we can keep the flicker of hope alight, that a time will come when true peace and justice will be established in all parts of the world.

We must remember that when human efforts fail, then God Almighty issues His Decree to determine the fate of mankind. Before God's Decree sets into motion and compels people towards Him and towards fulfilling the rights of mankind, it would be far better if the people of the world should themselves come to pay attention to these crucial matters, because when God Almighty is forced to take action, then His Wrath seizes mankind in a truly severe and terrifying manner.

In today's world, one terrifying manifestation of God's Decree could be in the shape of another world war. There is no doubt that the effects of such a war and its destruction will not be limited to the war itself or even to this generation. In fact, its horrific consequences will be exhibited for many generations to come. Just one tragic consequence of such a war will be the effect it will have on newborn children, both now and in the future. The weapons available today are so destructive that they could lead to generation after generation of children being born with severe genetic or physical defects.

Japan is the one country to have experienced the abhorrent consequences of atomic warfare, when it was attacked by nuclear bombs during the Second World War. Even today when you visit Japan and meet its people, you see an absolute fear and hatred of war visible in their eyes and from what they say. Yet the nuclear bombs that were used at that time and which caused widespread devastation, were much less powerful than the atomic weapons that are possessed by even very small nations today.

It is said that in Japan, even though seven decades have passed, yet the effects of the atom bombs are still continuing to be manifest on newborn children. If a person is shot by a bullet, then it is sometimes possible for him to survive through medical treatment, but if a nuclear war breaks out, then those



who are in the firing line will have no such luck. Instead, we will find that people will instantly die and freeze like statues, and their skin will simply melt away. Drinking water, food and vegetation will all be contaminated and affected by radiation. We can only imagine what type of diseases such contamination will lead to. In those places that are not directly hit and where the effects of the radiation are somewhat less, even there the risk of diseases and illness will become much higher and the future generations will also bear much greater risks.

Therefore, as I have said, the devastating and destructive effects of such warfare will not be limited to the war and its aftermath, but will pass from generation to generation. These are the real consequences of such warfare, and yet today there are selfish and foolish people who are extremely proud of their invention and describe what they have developed as a gift to the world.

The truth is that the so-called beneficial aspects of nuclear energy and technology can be extremely dangerous and lead to widespread destruction, due to either negligence or due to accidents. We have already witnessed such catastrophes, such as the nuclear accident that occurred in 1986 in Chernobyl, in what is now Ukraine, and just last year after the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, it too had to contend with great danger and the country was placed in fear. When such events happen, then it is also very difficult to repopulate the affected regions. Due to their unique and tragic experiences, the Japanese have become extremely cautious and indeed, their sense of fear and terror is fully justified.

It is an obvious statement that people die in wars, and so when Japan entered the Second World War, its Government and its people were well-aware that some people would be killed. It is said that approximately 3 million people died in Japan, and this came to about 4% of the country's population. Even though a number of other countries may have suffered higher proportions of deaths in terms of total numbers, yet the hatred and aversion to war that we find in the Japanese people remains much higher in comparison to others. The simple reason for this is certainly the two nuclear bombs that were dropped on Japan during World War II, and the consequences of which they are still witnessing and having to bear even today. Japan has proved its greatness and resilience by being able to repopulate and rehabilitate its towns relatively quickly. But let it be clear that if nuclear weapons are used again today, then it is quite possible that parts of certain countries could be completely wiped off the map. They could cease to exist.

Conservative estimates put the death toll of the Second World War at about 62 million and it is said that around 40 million of those who were killed were civilians. Thus, in other words, more civilians died than military personnel. Such devastation occurred despite the fact that apart from in Japan, a traditional war was fought with conventional weapons everywhere else.

The United Kingdom had to bear the loss of around half a million people. Of course, at that time, it was still a colonial power and so its colonies also fought on its behalf. If we include their losses then the death toll rises to millions.

In India alone, around 1.6 million people lost their lives.

However, today the situation has changed, and those very countries that were colonies of the United Kingdom, and who fought for the British Empire, could today fight against Great Britain if war breaks out. Moreover, as I mentioned earlier, even some small countries have acquired nuclear weapons.

What causes great fear is the knowledge that such nuclear weapons could end up in the hands of such people who either do not have the ability or who choose not to think about the consequences of their

actions. In truth, such people do not even care about the consequences, and are trigger-happy.

Thus, if the major powers do not act with justice, do not eliminate the frustrations of smaller nations and do not adopt great and wise policies, then the situation will spiral out of control and the destruction that will follow is beyond our comprehension and imagination. Even the majority of the world who do desire peace will also become engulfed by this devastation.

Thus, it is my ardent wish and hope that the leaders of all major nations come to understand this dreadful reality, and so instead of adopting aggressive policies and utilising force to achieve their aims and objectives, they strive to adopt policies that promote and secure justice.

Recently, a very senior Russian military commander issued a serious warning about the potential risk of a nuclear war. It was his view that such a war would not be fought in Asia or elsewhere, but would be fought on Europe's borders, and that the threat might originate and ignite from Eastern European countries. Though some people will say that this was simply his personal opinion, I myself do not believe his views to be improbable, but in addition, I also believe that if such a war breaks out, then it is highly likely that Asian countries will also become involved.

Another news item that was recently given widespread media coverage was the views of a recently retired chief of Israel's intelligence agency, Mossad. During an interview with the well-known American television channel, CBS, he said that it was becoming apparent that the Israeli Government wished to wage war on Iran. He said that if such an attack took place it would be impossible to know where or how such a war would come to end. Thus, he strongly advised against any attack.

In this respect, it is my opinion that such a war will end with nuclear destruction.

I recently also came across an article in which the author stated that the situation of the world today is similar to the situation in 1932, both in economic terms and also politically. He wrote that in certain countries the people held no confidence in their politicians or their so-called democracies. He also said that there were many other similarities and parallels



which were combining together to form the same image today that was witnessed just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War.

Some may disagree with his analysis, but on the contrary, I agree with it and that is why I believe the world's governments ought to be extremely worried and concerned at the current state of affairs. Similarly, the unjust leaders of some Muslim countries, whose only objective is to hold onto their power at any means and at any cost, should come to their senses. Otherwise, their acts and their foolishness will be the means of their demise, and they will lead their respective countries towards a most terrifying predicament.

We, who are members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, try our utmost to save the world and humanity from destruction. This is because in this era, we have accepted the Imam of the Age, who was sent by Allah as the Promised Messiah, and came as a servant to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who himself was sent as a Mercy for all of Mankind.

It is because we follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that we feel extreme pain and anguish in our hearts at the state of the world. It is that pain which drives us in our efforts to try and save humanity from destruction and suffering. Therefore, I and all other Ahmadi Muslims are striving to fulfil our responsibilities towards achieving peace in the world.

One way in which I have tried to promote peace is through a series of letters that I have written to certain world leaders. A few months ago, I sent a letter to Pope Benedict, which was delivered to him in person by an Ahmadi representative of mine. In the letter I said to him that as he was the leader of the world's biggest religious denomination, he ought to endeavour to establish peace.

In similar vein, more recently and upon observing that hostilities between Iran and Israel were boiling over to a very dangerous level, I sent a letter to both Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Iran's President, Mahmud Ahmedinejad, in which I urged them to forsake all forms of haste and recklessness when making decisions, for the sake of mankind.

I have also recently written to President Barack Obama and Canada's Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, calling on both of them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities towards the development of peace and harmony in the world.

I am also planning to write and warn other Heads of State and leaders in the near future.

I do not know if my letters will be given any value or weight by the various leaders I have written to, but whatever their reaction, an attempt has been made by me, as the Khalifa and spiritual leader of millions of Ahmadi Muslims worldwide, to convey their feelings and emotions about the perilous state of the world.

Let it be clear that I have not expressed these sentiments because of any personal fear, but instead, I am motivated out of a sincere love for humanity.

This love for humanity has been developed and instilled in all true Muslims by the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who, as I have already mentioned, was sent as a means of mercy and compassion for all of mankind.

Most likely you will be very surprised or even shocked to hear that our love for mankind is a direct result of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The question may arise in your minds, that why then are there Muslim terrorist groups that are killing innocent people, or why are there Muslim governments, who in order to protect their seats of power, are ordering the mass killings of members of their public?

Let it be absolutely clear that in reality, such evil acts are completely contrary to the real teachings of Islam. The Holy Qur'an does not give permission, under any circumstances, for extremism or terrorism.

In this age, according to our beliefs, God Almighty sent the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be upon him) as the Promised Messiah and the Imam Mahdi, in complete submission to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) was sent to propagate the real and true teachings of Islam and the Holy Qur'an. He was sent to establish a bond between man and God Almighty. He was sent to identify and recognise the rights owed by man to one another. He was sent to end all forms of religious warfare. He was sent to establish the respect, dignity and honour of every Founder and every Prophet of any religion. He was sent to draw attention towards attaining the highest standards of moral values and to establish peace, love, compassion and brotherhood throughout the world.

If you go to any part of the world, you will find these very qualities embedded in all true Ahmadi Muslims. For us neither terrorists nor extremists are examples, nor are the cruel Muslim dictators examples to us, nor are Western powers examples to us. The example that we follow is that of the Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and our guiding instructions are the Holy Qur'an.

Thus, from this Peace Symposium, I send a message to the entire world, that the message and teachings of Islam are of love, compassion, kindness and peace.

Sadly, we find that a small minority of Muslims present a completely distorted image of Islam and act upon their misguided beliefs. I say to all of you, that you should not believe this to be the real Islam and thus use such misguided acts as a licence to hurt the sentiments of the peaceful majority of Muslims or make them a target of cruelty.

The Holy Qur'an is the holiest and most sacred Book for all Muslims and so to use abusive and foul language or to burn it will certainly grievously injure the feelings of Muslims. We have seen that when this happens it often leads to a completely wrong and inappropriate reaction by extremist Muslims.

Just very recently we heard of two incidents in Afghanistan, where some American soldiers disrespected the Holy Qur'an, and killed innocent women and children in their homes. Similarly, a merciless person shot dead some French soldiers in the South of France without any reason, and then some days later he entered a school and killed three innocent Jewish children and one of their teachers.

We find that this behaviour is completely wrong and can never lead to peace. We also see such cruelties regularly come to pass in Pakistan and elsewhere and so all of these acts are giving the opponents of Islam fuel to vent their hatred and a pretext upon which to pursue their goals on a large scale. Such barbaric acts carried out on a smaller scale are not conducted due to personal enmities or grudges, but are in fact the result of the unjust policies adopted by certain governments, both at a domestic and at an international level.

Thus, for peace in the world to be established it is essential that proper standards of justice are developed at every level, and in every country of the world. The Holy Qur'an has deemed the killing of one innocent person without reason akin to killing all of mankind.

So once again, as a Muslim, I shall make it absolutely clear that Islam does not permit cruelty or oppression in any way, shape or form. This is an injunction that is absolute and without exception. The Qur'an further states that even if any country or people hold

enmity towards you, that must not stop you from acting in a fully just and fair manner when dealing with them. It should not be that any enmities or rivalries lead you to taking revenge or acting disproportionately. Another vital injunction given to us by the Holy Qur'an is that the wealth and resources of others should not be looked upon with envy or greed.

I have mentioned just a few points, but these are such that are crucially important because they lay the foundation for peace and justice in society and the wider world. I pray that the world pays attention to these key issues, so that we can be saved from the destruction of the world that we are being led towards by the unjust and untruthful people.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologise that I have taken up quite some time, but the truth is that the subject of establishing peace in the world is of truly vast importance.

Time is running out, and before it is too late we must all pay great heed and attention to the needs of the time.

Before I bring my speech to an end, I would like to talk about one important thing. As we are all aware, these days the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, is being celebrated. If we rewind the clock 115 years to 1897, the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria was also being celebrated. At that time, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community sent a congratulatory message to Queen Victoria.

In his message, he conveyed both the teachings of Islam and he also sent a message of prayers for the British Government and for the long life of the Queen. In his message, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) wrote that the best quality of the Queen's Government was that under its rule, all people were granted religious freedom.

In today's world the British Government no longer rules over the Sub-Continent, but still the principles of freedom of religion are deeply entrenched in British society and its laws, through which every person is granted religious freedom.

Indeed, a very beautiful example of this freedom is being witnessed here tonight where the followers of

various different faiths, religions and beliefs have joined together in one place with a common aspiration of seeking peace in the world.

Therefore, using the same words and prayers that the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) used, I take this opportunity to offer heartfelt congratulations to Queen Elizabeth. As he said:

"May our congratulations filled with happiness and gratitude to our compassionate Queen be conveyed. And may the honourable Queen always be kept happy and content."

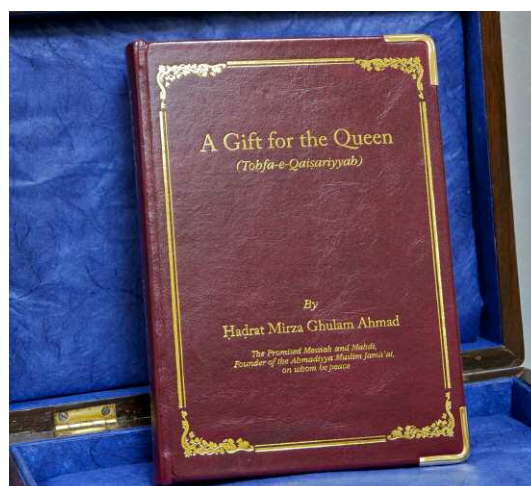
The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) further offered prayers for Queen Victoria, and so again I use his words to pray for Queen Elizabeth:

"O Powerful and Noble God. Through your Grace and Blessings keep our honoured Queen forever happy in the same way that we are living happily under her benevolence and kindness; and be kind and loving to her in the same way that we are living in peace and prosperity under her generous and righteous rule."

Thus, these are sentiments of gratitude that are held by every Ahmadi Muslim who is a British citizen.

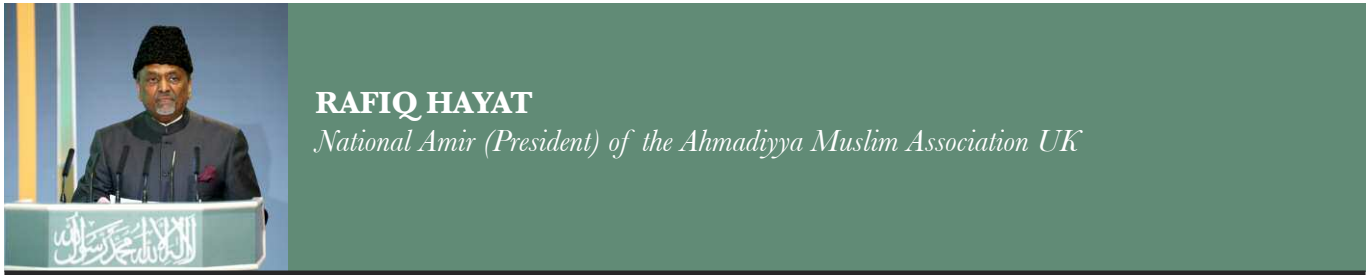
At the end I would like to once again express my gratitude to all of you from the depths of my heart, who by coming here have demonstrated their love, affection and brotherhood.

Thank you very much."



The book written by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community and sent to Queen Victoria on her Diamond Jubilee. This was republished and sent to Queen Elizabeth II on her Diamond Jubilee.

Extracts of other speeches delivered at the 2012 Peace Symposium



Assalamo alaikum.

It's a tremendous honour and privilege for me to welcome you to a key event of our community in the UK that, like today, has hosted many distinguished speakers and critically continues to play an important role in promoting a better appreciation of true Islam, of values of loyalty, freedom, equality, respect and peace.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community seeks to establish international peace, by means of spiritual transformation through love, persuasion, tolerance and charitable works. We endeavour to establish full and complete freedom of religion and conscience for every human being with absolutely no coercion in the matter of faith. The mission of the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community (The Promised Messiah) was to revive the peaceful teaching of Islam, and to inspire people in the love of God and the duty to serve mankind.

The Promised Messiah's life was exemplary in highlighting the true teaching of Islam, and I present a very simple but powerful example. During his lifetime, Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, and the Promised Messiah wrote a book, *Tohfa-e-Qaisariyyah*, meaning *A Gift to the Empress*, as a gift to the Queen in which he praised her for the freedom of religion that existed under her reign. He prayed for her health, and success, and long life, and also set out the beautiful teachings of Islam as a living faith. This year we are celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and we will also follow the exemplary teachings of Islam on loyalty, and express our unreserved gratitude to the Queen for upholding the principles of freedom of religion.

When one sees the persecution of people around the world because of faith, then such freedoms are worthy of praise and gratitude indeed. We will mark the jubilee with prayer, with fundraising for the Queen's

charities – particularly with a charity walk in May at the Tower of London (and this evening I have extended a special invitation to our mayor, Boris Johnson) – and we will partake in the celebrations by illuminating our mosques and inviting neighbours to share the occasion with us. We will also wear our hearts on our sleeves, and you will see nearer the time messages of congratulation to the Queen on our buses.



Message of congratulations featured on the London buses

This is the true spirit of loyalty and peace that we have been taught and we will practice. We believe that the freedom of religion is the cornerstone of world peace. We cherish it wherever we find it. But sadly the dream of world peace continues to prove elusive. When we look at international affairs, then it is within nations, and between nations, that the absence of true peace is apparent to a discerning eye. Whether one examines the new challenges facing the West, the emergence of the Arab Spring, or the trials facing countries across the Middle East, North Africa, true peace has yet to emerge. The quest for international peace is the theme of this year's Peace Symposium. Indeed it is the desire of our humble community – for humanity to achieve peace in all spheres of life – that inspired the conception of this annual Peace Symposium.



SIOBHAIN MCDONAGH MP

Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

“Tolerance is about allowing people to have freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and freedom to practice their religion without hindrance, without threats, and without imprisonment. These are important values to me, and I know that these are values that you cherish in your faith as well.”

It’s wonderful to see everybody again, and every year this event gets bigger, and I think that this so far is certainly the biggest Peace Symposium that I’ve seen.

The UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 declared that everyone has the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to change religion and to practice their religion through teaching, worship and observance. And who would argue with that statement? Well, many countries it seems. A report by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in 2009 found that nearly a third of the world’s 6.8 billion people now live in countries where there are high restrictions on religion. These include both government restrictions on faith, as well as hostility at the hands of fellow citizens. The examples of religious intolerance are shockingly widespread. In Burma, minority Christians and Muslims and Buddhist monks face restrictions on their worship, and experience targeted violence. In Iran, religious freedoms of non-Muslims – Jews, Armenians and Assyrian Christians – continue to deteriorate, and many non-Muslim minorities face increasing discrimination and imprisonment. In Pakistan, the blasphemy and anti-Ahmadi laws, have severely exacerbated religious tensions, and created an atmosphere of violent extremism. In Saudi Arabia, the government continues to prohibit churches, synagogues, temples, and other non-Sunni places of worship. And in India, a country not traditionally viewed as a repressive regime, anti-conversion laws have been imposed to make it harder to abandon Hinduism.

I mention all these examples, not only to highlight the prevalence of religious intolerance and its different guises, but also to argue that despite the UN Declaration on Human Rights, we still have far to go. And I think this is something we need to keep in mind, and in the context of the Arab awakening in Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria and Syria last year...

... But the state of the religious restrictions in surrounding countries, including ones in Europe, is a reminder that democracy is no guarantee of religious tolerance. I have argued before that tolerance is about allowing diversity and difference to exist. It’s about recognising that others are equal, and that we need to treat them with the dignity and respect that we would expect to be treated with. Tolerance is about allowing people to have freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and freedom to practice their religion without hindrance, without threats, and without imprisonment. These are important values to me, and I know that these are values that you cherish in your faith as well.

And so it is obvious to me that there should be these values inherent in any democracy, otherwise democracies, even ones inspired by ordinary citizens, will always fail.



BORIS JOHNSON

The Mayor of London

Assalamo alaikum everybody, and can I begin by saying as chairman of Transport for London how deeply grateful I am to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community for your sponsorship of the buses and your bus campaign, and let's hope there'll be another one, as has been suggested.

It was [almost] a hundred years ago that a Turkish refugee came to London with his wife and young children – in fact he came to this very borough. He was a journalist, politician – an extremely incompetent journalist and politician, because he managed so to enrage the people in power in Turkey that he came to London literally in fear of his life. He had all sorts of cities he could have chosen. He spoke very good French, he could have gone to Paris, he could have gone to Zurich where he had relatives, he could have gone to America. But, my friends, he came to London, fleeing from Turkey. And you may ask why he came to this city, speaking very little English, by the way very little English.

I think he came – and I hope you'll agree with this – because London is the pre-eminent city of peace in this world, or so I proudly assert as the mayor and I don't think I'm going to be contradicted tonight. He knew that London is a place where we have the rule of law – don't we? An independent judiciary – *habeas corpus* – a free press (when they're not being arrested, quite rightly), a virtually incorruptible political system (I measure my words carefully). And most important of all, in London we have the greatest diversity of communities on the earth, and complete freedom of religion, which is what we protect.

I owe him a great deal, that Turkish journalist and politician, because after spending a couple of years here he went back to Turkey and was duly assassinated – but that man was my great-grandfather. I think he would be amazed today to discover that his great-grandson had become Mayor of London (though possibly not as amazed as the Labour Party was when that happened).

I want today, tonight, as your Mayor, to thank you for

what you're doing to promote the things that made London shine out for my great-grandfather, today. You are promoting this city as the world's greatest city of peace and understanding, and I congratulate you on that. And as long as I'm Mayor of London, I just want you to know that I will support your community and the great work that you do, and in particular the many charitable causes that you support. And I can tell you tonight that I have already pledged to support the Ahmadiyya community's Jubilee Challenge. I've been signed up – there was absolutely no escape, because the offer was made to me in the presence of His Holiness, and in the presence of his Holiness – they said to me, “Will you do this whether you're Mayor or not?”

And I want you to know I have acceded, and whether I'm Mayor or not, I will join the Jubilee Challenge and I will ride on one of our hired bikes around the Tower of London to raise money for charity.

And I'm delighted to do that, because I believe that the work that *you* are doing incarnates so much that is good and remarkable about the genius of this city. And I believe that *you* are doing the work of so many others, and the work that should be done by so many of us in public life, in bringing together communities together through understanding and explanation, rather than seeking unnaturally and unnecessarily to divide them.

So I hope that this summer we not only work together to have a fantastic Diamond Jubilee but we can also make sure that we welcome the world – welcome the world to the Olympic and to the Paralympic Games here in London. And the whole world will come and see us, and they will see that we are the most diverse, the most welcoming, the most cosmopolitan and the most peaceful city on earth – and your community plays a huge part in putting that message across.

Thank you very much for everything that you're doing, and thank you very much for having me along tonight.



RT HON ED DAVEY MP

Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

Assalamo alaikum. It's a great honour to be at another Peace Symposium here, and to celebrate the works that your community do to promote peace. You Holiness is a great leader for the message of peace, and your community does so much work in this country and around the world to promote that message.

In my new responsibility as Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, I'm particularly aware that climate change is a threat to peace in different countries, between different countries, and around the world. And that might strike some people as odd. But I attended at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office this week a conference – a global conference – on climate security. And at that conference there were many people from around the world, including many people from militaries around the world. And that's because, whether it's the United States Pentagon's security policy or our own security policy, we are recognising that climate change and the threat of dangerous climate change is a threat to peace in many communities around the world. In the jargon it's called a 'threat multiplier' and that jargon means that that threat of climate change to scarce resources – whether it's land, food or water – is a threat that can turn people against their neighbour, against their neighbours, if we are not careful.

And at that conference I had the privilege to sit next to the president of Gabon, who told me that in his country the change in climate was already creating tensions, and how they were working hard to stop that. I met the foreign minister from Grenada, who told me how he represents many of the islands around the world – they came together as a grouping for the climate change talks. And those islands have problems, because in some of those islands their freshwater supplies are becoming salinated as the sea encroaches on the land and the sea water gets into the freshwater aquifers. These are real challenges and threats which are obviously threatening individuals and their community's lives, but they are also creating tensions.

Over the years of course there have been tensions over natural resources, including water. If one looks at the history, countries have put together treaties, to make sure that they shared the water from rivers that crossed boundaries – to make sure they shared that water fairly. And those treaties have often stood the test of time, even between countries that have been not friendly towards each other on other matters. But I have a real fear that those sorts of treaties over water will not last the test of time if we don't tackle climate change.

So at a Peace Symposium like this, when of course we are thinking of a whole range of threats to peace in difference communities – religious tensions, tensions between rich and poor countries, but here, particularly, from my responsibilities, the threats from climate change – it shows that we need to think broadly and widely about how we make sure we have peace in our world.

Of course the Ahmadiyya community already knew that, because of your works. You have raised much money, and you have fantastic water projects in some developing countries around the world, and I have seen those and heard about them, and you must be very proud about what you are doing to tackle some of the underlying threats caused by things like climate change. But I think we have to re-double our efforts in the years ahead, both to adapt to climate change that's already causing problems, but also to prevent climate change getting worse in the future.

So that's a serious message, but I hope it contributes to the discussions that you'll have tonight. I unfortunately can't be with you for much longer because of another event, but I'm so delighted that you're having another Peace Symposium, and getting people from around London together (and indeed from around the country) to show that together we can make sure that our world is a peaceful world. Thank you very much.



STEPHEN HAMMOND MP

Member of Parliament for Wimbledon and Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Assalamo alaikum. Your Holiness, on behalf of my colleagues Justine Greening, who’s a Member of Parliament for Putney, and Jane Ellison, who’s a Member of Parliament for Battersea, thank you very much for inviting us here this evening.

I’m delighted that my colleague Andrew Stunell, who is the minister in the Department for Communities and Local Government, will be giving the department’s official comments in a few minutes time. But the Secretary of State did ask me to read out a message on his behalf:

‘Your Holiness, it has rarely been more important for communities to come together in the search for peaceful co-existence, tolerance and equality. Appropriately the theme for your annual Peace Symposium on the 24th of March this year is International Peace. I am delighted to send you the following message for your event.



Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP – Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Faith is part of the fabric of this country. Faith institutions work harder than anyone to build bridges, to bring local people of all different backgrounds together. The values of peace, compassion and giving, which are so important at this time, are common to us all and can serve to unite communities. I commend the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK’s commitment to charitable causes, and the active engagement with communities, including with many young people. I am sorry I cannot be with you this evening, but I really admire what you’re trying to do, and I wish you every success: Eric Pickles.’



ANDREW STUNELL OBE, MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for Communities and Local Government

Assalamo alaikum. Your Holiness, friends: can I say how delighted I am to be here and to be representing the government in particular. And as a Minister for Communities to be able to say that we value very much the work that the community does in building civic capital in our society, in its charitable work, in its work in the wider community, and of course this event today is another signal of the importance that you put into building that community cohesion. I also want to say that as a Liberal Democrat MP, I am very strongly committed to a plural Britain, where we all work together and share our values together.

time visitor, you’ve also got a very impressive building as well, and the work that you’ve done here, that you’ve established here, is really very impressive indeed for me as a new visitor.

The community’s got a very impressive record of its community service and some previous speakers have already mentioned some of that. I have to say as a first-

As individuals, we form part of many different communities in our lives. It might be based on our faith, it might be based on our geography, it might be based on a whole range of other factors: shared experience and so on. And it helps to form our identities as people, as families, it allows us to get support in tough times, and of course it helps to form friendships and bonds. But no matter what we do, what we believe, or who we are, we are all linked together as members of a worldwide community, and here in this country, as part of a national society. And the government’s working to

“And faith groups have the networks and the local knowledge to put them at the very heart of service to the vulnerable in the communities around about. And the support that you provide is often very hard to match, and certainly very hard to buy. And your community should be proud of the record in backing charitable causes. Charity walks have raised over a million pounds. Your work with the National Blood Service is very widely spoken of and very highly regarded, and I want to commend your hard work in trying to build trust and mutual respect between people.” (Andrew Stunell)

build cooperation and collaboration between the communities in the country – that’s what our integration policy that we’ve published recently is about: to make sure that we all live and work together on common values and common goals. Everybody’s got a part to play in that, and the building blocks of the strong society are formed when communities look outside themselves for the opportunities that there are to work together, the opportunities to get involved and to improve the lives of their neighbours. I have to say that I’m looking forward to the television shots of the Mayor cycling round the Tower of London – an interesting signal of your outward-looking work on behalf of the whole community.

And of course in Britain we should celebrate our differences. We should be ready to acknowledge those differences and share them with each other, but we also have to work on sharing our common values as well. And we live in a country where the vast majority of people from every walk of life get on well together, where we have a sense of belonging to our neighbourhoods and to our country. We have a sense of pride in the place where we live, where we were brought up. And this year, with events like the Diamond Jubilee, there are opportunities for us all to share in that celebration of common values and common culture.

Now, we’re working to create a free and a fair and a responsible society... Now, we all recognise that there are challenges and tensions, and we have to speak honestly about those. But we also have to make sure that we create the space for the responses which are needed to develop integration, to draw our communities together. And I’m certain, speaking personally, that faith and faith communities have got a vital part to play in that. I don’t think there’s a mosque or a church or a synagogue or a temple or any other place of worship that looks entirely to itself. They look outwards. You look outwards. And that’s what today’s event is about: caring about the welfare of your community members, but also of your neighbours, no matter whether they’ve got a different faith, or no faith at all. And faith groups have the

networks and the local knowledge to put them at the very heart of service to the vulnerable in the communities around about. And the support that you provide is often very hard to match, and certainly very hard to buy. And your community should be proud of the record in backing charitable causes. Charity walks have raised over a million pounds. Your work with the National Blood Service is very widely spoken of and very highly regarded, and I want to commend your hard work in trying to build trust and mutual respect between people.

Now, the coalition government is working hard to create the conditions for integration, helping all communities to have the aspirations, and the capacity and the opportunities to play a full and an active part in wider society. And it’s really good to come here tonight and join you, because you’re providing such a powerful example of a community which has got the aspirations, which is ready to build the capacity and is taking the opportunities. And the government and I look forward to hearing more of what you do in the years ahead. Thank you very much.



COUNCILLOR STEPHEN ALAMBRITIS

Leader of Merton Council

Assalamo alaikum. We are proud that in this borough we have the largest mosque in Western Europe. We're proud of your community, proud of what you do, proud of your community cohesion and your contribution to peace within this borough...it is one of the safest and one of the most cohesive communities in London, and I pay tribute to you all for that.

I wanted to apply some balance into Boris Johnson's talk. Not that I am of one political persuasion and that he is of another, but because I am of a Greek orientation and he is of a Turkish orientation. Interestingly, on Friday I shall be the guest of the South London Turkish Association, and I shall be going over to Istanbul – I should say 'Constantinople' as a Greek – as their guest, to meet the Mayor of Istanbul. So there is good community cohesion here.

At a time – it's just an example of how we need to be very, very forgiving in our approach, as we listen to the news, as we take a stance on what we hear about issues and about economic issues as well – today, you may not find many people speaking up for Greece. Greece is a pariah

of the European Commission, has embroiled Europe in financial crisis. But there was a time when Greece spoke out (and spoke up) for decency, for honesty, and for faith in Europe, and that was in 1942, when the Archbishop of Greece, Archbishop Damaskinos, wrote a letter to the Nazis, urging them to stop the persecution of the Jewish community in Thessaloniki. To this day, that is the only written piece of evidence at that time in opposition to the genocide of the Jewish community. The Nazi general in Greece threatened to shoot the Archbishop Damaskinos. Archbishop Damaskinos replied that Greek archbishops are not shot, they are hung, and could he keep to that tradition.

This courageous response saved the archbishop, who went on to write 27,000 false certificates for the Jewish community of Athens and Thessaloniki, to save them from the persecution.

So the story is that we must at all times remember the *good* in nations, and the *good* in people in the past, as well as during the present and into the future and I thank you for doing that: Thank you.



LORD AVEBURY

Vice-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Human Rights

Assalamo alaikum. When you think about the enormous amount of harm by wars and internal conflicts, both in terms of human suffering and the loss of life, you've got to agree that we're not doing enough collectively to prevent wars and conflicts. You've got currently some sixteen UN peace-keeping operations spread across four continents, with a total budget of \$7 billion in the current year, but with some situations actually getting worse, and some new crises not being covered at all.

The UN isn't involved at all in Syria, as you know, because of the objections by Russia and China, and people are being killed there every day. There is no UN

presence in Afghanistan, where it looks as though in two years time we shall be handing over to an unstable and corrupt regime. There's no peace-keeping operation to protect against the exchange of missiles between Israel and Gaza. In Sudan, you've got military attacks on civilians being intensified, leaving some commentators to describe what's happening as a genocide. And President Bashar, an indicted war criminal, is less inclined than ever to listen to international advice now that he's got piles of oil money. In Somalia too, there are psychopaths in control of large areas of the middle and the south of the country, driving half a million refugees into Kenya

“It’s astonishing how quickly the struggle between capitalism and communism evaporated. But now there’s an emerging conflict between an ideology based on hate and fear, and one that’s based on love and tolerance and that, as you know, is the slogan of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community: Love for all, hatred for none. If that’s the message that we can spread across the globe, then we’ll cure all these conflicts, but it’s a huge task and one which the Ahmadiyya community is in the lead in promoting.” (Lord Avebury)

(where they live in the Dadaab refugee camp), and protecting pirates who prey on international shipping in the Indian Ocean. In the Maldives there’s yet to be an agreement for the mediation by the UN following the coup last month, and in Mali, as we’ve just heard, there was a coup that has ejected over 200,000 people from the country into Algeria and Mauritania.

Now it would be easy enough, in the face of these enormous problems, if we retreated into isolationism. But that would be politically and morally wrong and I know I don’t need to say that to an audience of this kind, where we’re all dedicated to world peace. But far-away conflicts do generate effects here in the UK, as we see from the arrival of refugees from all over the world, and as a trading nation, these conflicts harm our economic interests. They undermine efforts to deal with global problems, such as the one that Ed Davey mentioned – climate change, over-population, the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS are all exacerbated by these conflicts.

And less visibly, but perhaps in the long run equally important as any of the other effects, conflicts may trigger the spread the millenarian ideologies, such as Salafism, taking hold in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia.

So I very much welcome the enormous contribution, as we’ve heard, that’s been made by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to the debate as to how we can promote peace across the globe. It’s astonishing how quickly the struggle between capitalism and

communism evaporated. But now there’s an emerging conflict between an ideology based on hate and fear, and one that’s based on love and tolerance and that, as you know, is the slogan of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community: *Love for all, hatred for none*. If that’s the message that we can spread across the globe, then we’ll cure all these conflicts, but it’s a huge task and one which the Ahmadiyya community is in the lead in promoting.

So I would like to express my warmest thanks to the Ahmadiyya community for everything that it does, which is particularly striking when you consider the persecution which is endured by the Ahmadis in many countries of the world. It’s a tremendous tribute to their religion and to the wonderful work that they do all over the world, that this contrast exists between the persecution of the community in places like Pakistan, and the charitable and peace-making work that they do in so many countries across the globe.

The 2011 Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace



The Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace was launched in 2009. It is an international award which recognises the work carried out to advance the cause of peace. It is given to those who made a distinctive contribution towards peace without favour or prejudice. The winner of this peace prize for 2011/12 is SOS Children's Villages UK for its work with children across the world, and especially in Africa.

SOS Children's Villages has excelled in the field of service to humanity by working tirelessly to provide life-changing opportunity for tens of thousands of vulnerable children in some of the most difficult and challenging areas of the world.

Its work in Chile, Zambia, Malawi, Ivory Coast, to name just a few, and indeed right across the developing world is truly commendable, and by giving genuine hope to children and families, it is enabling practical human development. SOS Children's Villages is part of an international federation and it operates 518 villages worldwide with 80,000 people in its care, and its programme provides medical treatment for nearly half a million children. It provides shelter, education, healthcare, and most importantly, hope.

Dame Mary Richardson DBE, the President of SOS Children's Villages UK, received the award on behalf of the organisation.



Dame Mary Richardson DBE, President of SOS Children's Villages UK

Your Holiness, ladies and gentlemen. I'm deeply moved, honoured and privileged, to receive the international Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace. I accept this on behalf of all the SOS adults who dedicate their lives to this wonderful and quiet organisation, and on behalf of the orphans in their care, both those in the SOS villages and the hundreds of thousands in the community, in 133 countries and territories.

At SOS, we work alongside all governments, and raise children of different faiths under one roof in a loving family home. We work in numerous places where there is or has been conflict, but we put children first at all times. At the moment, for example, in southern Sudan, we have an emergency programme for people being displaced. In Somalia, our colleagues work in incredibly difficult circumstances to keep the children safe, even when surrounded by conflict. In Bosnia, our staff, all Muslims, have specifically requested that we extend our support for child-headed families and other vulnerable families in the community into the Serbian

area. In Sri Lanka we are currently building a new village to help children in the aftermath of the long conflict, as we have everywhere else in the world, and I was in Sri Lanka soon after the tsunami, when children in trauma were still being found and brought into the village. I watched as the mothers took them into their arms, and the children in the homes welcomed them. Love for all.

Orphans require long-term help, and generally, local government has at least legal responsibility for them. And so at SOS we have to cooperate, not condemn, and this method has allowed us to continue to do crucial work in places like Zimbabwe, where others have been asked to leave. There is no point in being critical and then being expelled from a country, when children depend on us being there.

This prize is for SOS children and we accept this honour with immense gratitude. The money will be spent for our work worldwide, wherever the need is greatest. Thank you.

The 2012 Peace Symposium



Some of the other key dignitaries who attended included:

- Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for Transport
- Jane Ellison MP
- Seema Malhotra MP
- Tom Brake MP
- Virendra Sharma MP
- Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon
- HE Wesley Momo Johnson The Ambassador of Liberia,
- HE Abdullah Al-Radhi The Ambassador of Yemen,
- HE Miguel Solano Lopez, The Ambassador of Paraguay,
- Commodore Martin Atherton, Naval Regional Commander,
- Councillor Jane Cooper, The Worshipful Mayor of Wandsworth,
- Councillor Milton McKenzie, the Worshipful Mayor of Barking and Dagenham,
- Councillor Amrit Mann, The Worshipful Mayor of Hounslow
- Siobhan Benita, independent Mayoral candidate for London
- Diplomats from several other countries including India, Canada, Indonesia and Guinea



Private audience with Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad before start of symposium.



Members of the Urdu speaking media meeting the Khalifa.



Members of the English media meeting the Khalifa after the symposium.



Members of the army and navy meeting the Khalifa.



HE Miguel Solano Lopez, The Ambassador of Paraguay meeting the Khalifa.



London Mayor Boris Johnson addressing the audience.



Some of the guests that attended:(from left to right)

1. Siobhan Benita – candidate for London Mayor 2012.
2. Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.
3. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon.
4. Stephen Hammond MP.
5. Cllr Jane Cooper, The Mayor of Wandsworth.
6. Cllr Milton McKenzie, The Mayor of Barking and Dagenham.
7. Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for Transport.
8. Jane Ellison MP.

Loyalty

Freedom

Equality

Respect

Peace



www.LoveForAllHatredForNone.org

Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK

The London Mosque
16 Gressenhall Road
London SW18 5QL

Tel: 020 8874 5836

Fax: 020 8874 4779

www.ahmadiyya.org.uk

www.alislam.org • www.mta.tv

Email: ExternalAffairs@ahmadiyya.org.uk