



The
National Peace
Symposium on
**Religion,
Freedom and Peace**

Golden Principles of World Peace

Saturday 14th March 2015 – Baitul Futuh Mosque, London

An Overview of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community is a religious organisation, with branches in more than 200 countries. It is the most dynamic denomination of Islam in modern history, with an estimated membership in the tens of millions worldwide.

It was established in 1889 by **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad** (1835-1908) 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 every year 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 Southfields). It is, therefore, one of the oldest and most established Muslim organisations in Britain and now has 129 branches across Britain.

The Khalifa of Islam: A Man of Peace

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad

His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad was elected as the fifth Khalifa of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 2003.

His Holiness inspires his community to serve humanity with the spirit of kindness and humility that is integral to Islam. In accordance with the teachings of Islam he upholds the honour of all prophets of God and highlights the role of religion in the promotion of peace.

His Holiness has delivered addresses at the House of Commons, Capitol Hill and the European Parliament and also written to world leaders urging them to inculcate a true sense of justice and peace in international relations to avoid regional conflicts from engulfing the entire world.



“If we want to save the world then true justice needs to be shown at every level of society and the problems faced in each country should be solved in a fair way that removes frustrations.”

(National Peace Symposium 2014)

The 12th National **PEACE SYMPOSIUM**

The 12th National Peace Symposium of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK was held on Saturday 14th March 2015 at the Baitul Futuh Mosque in South London. The theme of the event was 'Religion, Freedom and Peace' and it was attended by more than 1000 delegates from 27 countries including a number of Parliamentarians, diplomats and faith and civic leaders. Speakers included Professor Heiner Bielefeldt (UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion and Belief), Siobhain McDonagh MP (Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community), Lord Avebury (Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group), Dr Charles Tannock MEP (Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims Group), Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon (Minister for Communities), and Rt Hon Justine Greening MP (Secretary of State for International Development). The event also saw the Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace being presented to Mrs Sindhutai Sapkal of India for her inspirational work with homeless orphans. The keynote address was delivered by His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, the Worldwide Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Golden Principles for World Peace

Keynote Address at the 12th National Peace Symposium

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz*, and *Bismillah*, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, said:

"All distinguished guests, Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barkatohu - peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity thank all of the distinguished guests who have joined us here this evening.

This year the Peace Symposium is taking place after an interval of just five months and so I am particularly grateful to our old friends who have again accepted our invitation after a relatively short period of time. I believe that one reason you attend this event is because you wish to hear the views of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in relation to establishing peace in the world and its efforts in this regard.

However, I also believe that some of you are interested to learn about whether what was said at the previous Peace Symposium has led to any positive outcome or yielded fruitful results. It is good to have a keen interest in such matters and certainly all people should desire that any efforts to promote peace prove successful and are blessed. It is certainly my personal hope that our efforts have had some positive impact in the world. Nevertheless, despite our collective aspirations for peace, the truth is that much of the world is continuing to spiral towards a state of further conflict, disorder and darkness. On a positive note, since our last Peace Symposium there seems to be one small ray of light flickering in the distance and which gives rise to a note of cautious optimism.

One of the points I made at the last Peace Symposium was that the world should urgently target and seek to block the funding and supply-line of the terrorist group known

as ISIS or I.S. I do not claim that it is because of me, or the fact that I drew attention to this matter, but certainly over the past few months there have been tangible efforts to tackle this crucial issue. For example, in February, the United Nations Security-Council unanimously passed a Resolution directly targeting the funding of ISIS and ordering sanctions to be levied on any groups who sought to illegally purchase oil from it or engage in any other form of trade. If this Resolution is properly implemented then, as I have said before, I believe that it will not take years to defeat ISIS, but rather its cruelties can be brought to an end in a matter of months.

And so if they are truly sincere in their desire to establish peace in the world, all Muslim countries and their allies should seek to implement these measures to the best of their abilities. Certainly, it is the heavy burden of the Muslim world to give their full support and commitment to this cause. This is because the so-called government or state that has been established by ISIS is not only committing the most reprehensible and barbaric acts of cruelty - but is doing so in the name of Islam. This is a cause of extreme sorrow for true Muslims as they know that such heinous acts have no link whatsoever to their religion.

Recently, a French journalist, who had been kept as a prisoner by ISIS for ten months before being released, spoke about his experiences whilst in captivity. He said that he never saw a copy of the Quran during his entire time as a prisoner of ISIS, and when he asked the terrorists how they justified beheading people and their various other cruelties, they never had any answers. They would simply say that they were enforcing their will as they pleased and would continue to do so. The United Kingdom should be particularly concerned because, according to the journalist's account, extremists who had travelled to Syria from Britain were com-



mitting some of the worst atrocities and were even more brutal than the other extremists.

Clearly, this is an issue of grave concern for the British authorities. On an almost daily basis in the news there are reports of youths, both male and female, who have been radicalised here and have either travelled to Syria or Iraq or who have been arrested here for various terrorism-related offences. Radicalisation is therefore a serious problem for the United Kingdom, for Europe and indeed the wider world. And so governments are rightly voicing their concerns and are debating the means of tackling this issue. However, the proper and appropriate measures are still not being taken to confront it.

For example, here in Britain, the police and intelligence agencies have admitted that some of the radicalised people who have gone to Syria and Iraq were not properly monitored, and if they had been, they could have been prevented from leaving the country. Anyway, and as I have indicated already, it is not just the Muslim world that should be worried about the current state of affairs. Rather, it is a cause of serious alarm for the entire world

because if the extremists who have gone abroad return to their countries of origin, it could lead to dire consequences and potentially great danger to that society.

In terms of the reaction of world leaders to ISIS, it has been pleasing to see that certain politicians and religious figures have chosen not to add fuel to the fire but have instead made it clear that they do not believe that ISIS or any other terrorist group represent the true teachings of Islam. For example during a recent speech in Washington, President Obama said very clearly that the terrorists were betraying their religion and had no link with Islam. Just a few days ago, the Catholic Archbishop of New York, also spoke openly against the notion that Islam justified the terrorist activities of groups like ISIS.

And here in Europe, certain broad-minded politicians and religious leaders have also reacted responsibly to the terrorist attacks falsely perpetrated in the name of Islam. For example in January, as I am sure you will all be aware, terrorists attacked the offices of the magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris. It was a horrifying attack and completely against the teachings of Islam. When the issue of free speech arose in the days that followed, Pope Francis said that we should not provoke one another or insult each other's faiths. He said that the dignity of each faith and religion should be respected and that we should speak for the common good.

He very rightly said that even if his very good friend uttered a bad word against his mother, he should expect a punch in return. In my personal view this was a very wise and intelligent statement and an effort by the Pope to support religious freedom and tolerance. Anyway, in terms of extremism, let it be absolutely clear that wherever and whenever anyone seeks to justify their hate-filled atrocities or injustices in the name of Islam they should be condemned. Let it also be very

clear that such acts have no relation whatsoever to the true and peaceful teachings of Islam. As I alluded to earlier, I do not believe that policymakers and governments are currently taking all the necessary steps required to stop extremism

In my view, it would be far more effective for the major powers to support the local governments, by taking them into confidence and seeking to build a relationship of mutual trust. Through close co-operation a joint-strategy should be formed to stop the spread of extremism and its hate-filled ideology. This will surely prove more effective than opposing the local governments by giving military training and weapons to the local rebels. Such policies can only further inflame the existing turmoil and tensions in those countries. Indeed, we have already seen the dangers and folly of this policy. Some time ago, certain major powers gave military training to members of the Syrian Opposition and it was later widely reported that many of those same rebels had taken their newly acquired arms and training and joined terrorist groups. Yet despite this precedent, it has now been announced that thousands more Syrian rebels are going to be given military training in Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

I believe it would have been far more constructive for the major powers to build bridges with the local governments and to help them end the terrorism in their countries. This support could have been given on the condition that the respective governments guaranteed that they would serve their citizens fairly and would not usurp their rights in any shape or form. Where in Syria, Iraq or certain other countries the public have stood up against their governments it has led to a power vacuum, which has been fully exploited by extremists to its great benefit. The civil disorder and lawlessness in those countries has allowed terrorist organisations to establish a foothold and created the perfect



environment for them to flourish. As I have said, people from Europe, Australia, even China and other parts of the world have travelled across borders to join ISIS and the repercussions of this will certainly be felt in Europe and the West. Therefore, there is no doubt that this is not just an issue of concern for the Muslim world, but rather it is a global issue and has the potential to increase conflict across the world.

In short, the measures to curb extremism are proving ineffective. If we look at the case of Libya, just a few years ago some powers helped the local rebels to remove the Gaddafi regime. But what did this achieve? Has there been any benefit or improvement in the lives of the Libyan people? Certainly not! Rather that country has been left devastated, divided and in ruins. It has become a breeding ground for terrorism and instability. It is said that even Gaddafi's hometown is now under the control of terrorists linked to ISIS and this town is only 300 miles from Italy's coast. Thus, analysts have said that in this way extremists have now virtually reached the doorstep of Europe.

If we look at Eastern Europe – there are radicalised individuals who are not only going to Syria and Iraq, but are also travelling to join terrorist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Indeed, Pakistan and Afghanistan have long been extremely unstable countries where terrorism and extremism have been prevalent. This too is a continuous cause of great concern. Then if we turn towards Africa, terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabab are acting entirely against the teachings of Islam by perpetrating the most barbaric cruelties. The ramifications and effects of this will not remain confined to these African countries, but rather will be felt in the wider world. And it is not just in the Muslim world that we see disorder and conflict. For example, the situation in Ukraine remains unresolved and highly dangerous. Although a tentative ceasefire was recently signed, a further escalation of the conflict and a future war cannot be ruled out. The major powers would be unwise to underestimate the threat posed by that region. Much has been written and said about how more than twenty five years after the end of the Cold War, political tensions and other serious issues have engulfed the region once again, the economic situation being one of them, and this cannot be taken for granted.

Another issue we are seeing is that various governments are increasing their military spending. For example, China's Government recently announced that it was vastly increasing its military budget for the

forthcoming year. However, its budget remains less than some of the other big countries. The point is that nations are competing with one another and seeking to outdo each other in terms of their defence spending. This race to increase military budgets is not without reason, but in fact there are underlying motives behind it. If we truly want peace then the United Nations and the major powers need to urgently tackle these issues in a just and fair manner.

If we observe the situation in the Middle East it is clear that the hatred and hostility between Israel and Palestine is continually increasing and at frequent intervals this enmity erupts into senseless violence and bloodshed. Then, we are all aware that relations between Israel and Iran are highly volatile. For a long time there has been a complete lack of trust and mutual hostilities seems to be increasing on a daily basis. In short, the vast majority of the world is engulfed in a state of disorder and conflict. Regrettably, the world has failed to devise an effective plan or strategy to free mankind from this desperate state.

Underlying issues and root causes are being ignored or at least not given the serious attention they require. Every country believes that its policies are right and that others are in the wrong. Many countries believe that what is happening in other parts of the world will not affect them. Such beliefs and perceptions are mistaken and can only prove to be harmful. Even where attempts are made to establish peace they are often futile, because strategies to resolve the problem or situation taken an unnecessarily long time. Thus we should realise and recognise the critical need of the hour. And whenever planning to control the situation, it should be in a minimal time. We must accept that peace can only be built upon the solid foundations of honesty, integrity and justice. These are the keys to peace. Until there is honesty and justice no solution will ever prove beneficial. In terms of

our community – we, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, have no power or worldly influence. Our objectives are purely spiritual and so we do not seek power or government. We have no political ambitions or objectives. As a religious community we desire only that the world comes to recognise its Creator and that people fulfil the rights of one another. To fulfil these twin objectives we make every possible effort in all parts of the world. We seek to inform others that Islam's teachings have no link with the violence and disorder witnessed in the world.

And so I shall now present a few of the basic teachings of Islam in relation to the establishment of peace. However, before doing so, I would like to make it clear that the blame for the disorder in today's world cannot be solely attributed to Islam or Muslims alone. In fact, there are many other reasons and factors that are fuelling the unrest prevalent in much of the world. I have already indicated towards this point by saying that it is only when justice and honesty prevail that we can move towards a truly peaceful and harmonious world. There is no doubt that major powers and certain political and religious leaders are motivated by greed and their vested interests. Their selfish desires have contributed to the desperate state of affairs that we are witnessing and so responsibility also lies with them. The world is being consumed by various issues that are leading to frustration and resentment, which in turn are undermining peace. For example, the effects of the financial crisis continue to be felt in much of the world. In Europe, discontent is increasing and the integrity of the European Union is being challenged and undermined. Anti-immigrant or nationalist parties are gaining popularity in many countries. I have already mentioned the conflict in Ukraine and the global arms race. These are all threats to world peace that are not linked to Islam, but rather have developed as a result of an unquenchable thirst for power, influence and

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And so wherever in the world there is conflict and violence - whether conducted in the name of Islam or not - the truth is that the perpetrators are never motivated by any religion but only by their own desire to attain power.

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resources. If we reflect upon the policies of the major powers we see that whilst they do not overtly subjugate weaker nations, they do seek to influence them unduly, by exerting their control and taking advantage of their resources. This is not anything new that I am saying but is quite apparent to all.

And so wherever in the world there is conflict and violence - whether conducted in the name of Islam or not - the truth is that the perpetrators are never motivated by any religion but only by their own desire to attain power. If we reflect upon all of these points it compels any sensible person to question the direction the world is moving towards in order to pursue and fulfil materialistic desires. As far as Islam is concerned, we see that in this era, Islam’s teachings are being constantly misrepresented and distorted. It is claimed that Islam promotes a violent Jihad and bloodshed. However nothing could be further from the truth. And so let me make it clear that when the early Muslims were permitted to fight by Allah the Almighty, permission was not granted just to protect the Muslims or Islam itself.

Rather, this permission for a defensive war was granted to protect the religious freedom of all people. In Chapter 22, Verses 40-41

of the Holy Quran, Allah the Almighty said that if the Muslims did not defend themselves at that stage then no church, synagogue, temple, mosque or any other place of worship would remain safe. Therefore, where Islam gave permission for a defensive war, it was granted in order to safeguard every single religion and to protect the right of all people to freely practice and profess their faith. If a Muslim seeks to harm any other person, regardless of their faith or belief, or if any Muslim tries to damage the sacred places of other people, then he or she acts in complete violation of this very clear Quranic injunction.

In relation to this, there have been recent reports that ISIS has destroyed historical monuments and artifacts in ancient Iraqi cities. For more than 1400 years these cities were preserved and protected by successive Muslim rulers and governments and now it has been destroyed in Islam’s name. This can only be branded as an extreme cruelty and a transgression of Islam’s teachings. No true Muslim could ever comprehend acting in this way.

Regarding the true concept of Jihad and Islam’s peaceful teachings, I cited many Qur’anic references during my address at last

“ In Chapter 2, Verse 189 of the Quran, Allah says that you should not consume the wealth of others through falsehood and injustice. And then in Chapter 15, Verse 89, Allah the Almighty says that you should not covet the wealth or resources of others.



Address at Capitol Hill, USA in June 2012

When I quoted this verse in my Capitol Hill address, one congressman came to me and said you have very rightly pointed out not only the teaching but the reality. ”

year’s Peace Symposium and there is no need to repeat them all now. However, certainly the verse I have just mentioned makes it clear that what is commonly alleged about Jihad is completely wrong.

Furthermore, in Chapter 10, verse 100 of the Holy Quran, Allah said to the Holy Prophet (*peace be upon him*) that if Allah had desired he could have enforced His Will and compelled all of mankind to believe. Yet Allah gave each person freedom of choice, and given this, what right did the Holy Prophet (*peace be upon him*) or indeed anyone else have to force or compel others to accept Islam? Throughout his life, the Holy Prophet of Islam (*peace be upon him*) greatly emphasised the need for justice and equity and for all forms of cruelty to be stopped. Indeed, it is narrated that the Holy Prophet (*peace be upon him*) said that a person should help both the oppressed and the oppressor.

It is obvious that helping the oppressed requires you to show love and compassion, to protect them, to free them from their difficulties and to comfort them. However, the Holy Prophet (*peace be upon him*) said that we should not stop there, but we should take the next step and even help the oppressor. And

helping an oppressor requires that a person stops them from committing injustices and cruelties. These are the means of creating peace amongst people.

If today’s governments followed this basic principle and prioritised justice and helping others over and above their own interests, the world would be a far better place. Whilst all governments and leaders claim they are trying to establish peace and justice, the sad reality is that they continue to prioritise their own agendas, interests and motives. In Chapter 2, Verse 189 of the Quran, Allah says that you should not consume the wealth of others through falsehood and injustice. And then in Chapter 15, Verse 89, Allah the Almighty says that you should not covet the wealth or resources of others. When I quoted this verse in my Capitol Hill address, one congressman came to me and said you have very rightly pointed out not only the teaching but the reality.

In Chapter 5, Verse 9, Allah the Almighty has said that you should not let the enmity or hatred of others incite you to act otherwise than with justice. What a truly magnificent standard of justice and honesty this is. And for the sake of protecting the sanctity of religion

and to prevent disorder in the world, Allah the Almighty has said in Chapter 6, Verse 109, that you should never insult or speak ill of the idols or deities of others because then they may be provoked into insulting Allah and this will lead to a never-ending cycle of enmity and hatred.

Then the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said that when you abuse or disrespect someone's father, you abuse your own father. See how beautifully limits of freedom of speech and respecting honour have been laid down. Thus whosoever trespasses it contravenes the commands of Allah and the Prophet. In Chapter 60, Verse 9, Allah the Almighty has said that those who do not persecute or seek to obstruct your faith should always be treated with fairness, respect and kindness. Thus, it is entirely contrary to Islam's teachings to be cruel to those who are living peacefully amongst you in the Muslim countries - whether they are Christians, Jews, Yazidis, Pagans or the people of any other beliefs or even Atheists.

Thus, these are the golden principles and teachings that are required to establish peace in the world. I have presented just a few aspects that highlight the beauty and nobility of Islam's teachings. These teachings are the means of protecting all people in the world. And it is due to these very teachings that true Muslims act as guarantors and guardians for the peace and security of all segments of society.

Seated before me are various politicians, influential figures and well-educated people and so I wish to reiterate that you should all try your level best to influence your governments and leaders positively towards establishing justice and honesty at all levels. These are the keys to solving the many international and domestic crises of our time. For many years I have warned that we are heading towards a horrific destruction and now many politicians and analysts are reaching the same conclusion that we are heading rapidly towards a Third World War.

Whilst some are saying that another World War is now unavoidable, I believe that even now there is time for the world to wake up to the stark reality it faces and to arrest this threat. To do so, all people and their leaders will need to stop looking only in one direction and caring only for their own interests. Instead, they will need to broaden their outlook and to have a realistic and fair approach in all of their matters. They must seek to fulfil the requirements of justice, fairness and honesty at all levels of society.

They should seek to establish peace wherever and however they can. And the foremost thing is to recognise their Creator as He should be recognised. I hope and pray that may Allah enable all of us to understand and recognise the gravity of our responsibilities and to fulfil our duties. May Allah bless you all. Thank you very much."

Key for Salutations:

- sa** *Sallallaahu Alaihi wa Sallam* – “May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.” This is written after the name of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.
- as** *Alaihis Salaam* – “May peace be upon him.” This is written after the name of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet^{sa}.
- ra** *Razi-Allaahu anhu/anha/anhum* – “May Allah be pleased with him/her.” This is written after names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and of the Promised Messiah^{as}.
- aba** *Ayyadahullaahu Ta’aalaa binasrihil Aziz* – “May Allah the Almighty help him with His powerful support” Written after the name of the current *Khalifa* of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace was launched in 2009 and is awarded in recognition of an individual's or an organisation's contribution for the advancement of the cause of peace.

The 2014 Peace Prize was awarded to Mrs Sindhutai Sapkal of India.

Mrs Sapkal is an outstanding lady who has a remarkable life story. Born on 14 November, 1948 at Pimpri Megge village in Maharashtra, Mrs Sapkal's life started as being an unwanted child. She married at a very young age to an abusive husband who abandoned her when she was nine months pregnant.

Though her father supported her and was keen on educating her, she could not continue her studies after fourth grade due to family responsibilities and early marriage.

As she spent more time begging, she realised that there are many orphans and children abandoned by their parents. She could feel their pain and she decided to adopt them. She started begging more earnestly in order to feed the many children that she had adopted. Gradually she decided to adopt every child she came across and over a period of time, she emerged as the "Mother of Orphans".

Over the past decades she has become mother to nearly 2000 orphans – children who would not have lived if it were not for Mrs Sapkal. Even to



this day she continues to fight for the next meal. She does not take support from anyone and all her efforts go into feeding the destitute.

Mrs Sapkal has helped the orphans to receive an education, get married and also supported them to settle down in life. She treats the orphans as her own children and some of them are now successful lawyers, doctors and engineers.

Her work is truly inspirational. She travelled all the way from India with one of her adopted sons to receive the award and to address the audience

Mrs Sindhutai Sapkal

"Mother of Orphans"

Mrs Sapkal spoke in Hindi and an extract of her speech is presented below.

Today I forgot everything, that where was I and where I have reached today.

I had nothing. I was a beggar in railways and felt scared at night. I was twenty years old and



I lived in Sam Chan. Once I was crying loudly that *I have nothing, I have nothing, I have no one,....*and I heard someone say that Sindhutai, *"you are making a mistake! Everyone has nothing because everyone leaves empty handed, a coffin is not a beautiful thing Sindhutai! And death never accepts a bribe"*, and I shouted loudly that *"forget*

“I said to myself that every child should be yours, you have to live for these children, this is happiness and this is the way forward. Never be unkind to anyone, my husband who had thrown stones on me, I forgave him too, I am taking care of him.”

dying, forget dying, I shall live from today.” And I realised that this work should be expanded to help others as well.

One night I was sitting at a station and I saw a beggar who was very sick. It was 2.00am at night and I was thinking what is in such a life, perhaps it is better, if such a person dies. I too felt close to death and I thought I would also die that night. I had a piece of bread that I took with me as I thought if I did not die, I would still feel hungry. After a short while I heard someone crying. It was that beggar who was very sick and he was crying that *“I am going to die, I am very sick, I am very thirsty, someone please give me a little water, I’m going to die, I have nothing.”* I said to myself I am going to die anyway and he is asking for water at the time of his death so I gave him some water and gave him my bread to eat and said to him drink this water, eat this bread and then die. But after eating and drinking he did not die! I thought that if he did not die after eating and drinking then why should I die? If someone is hungry, I should feed him and so I started offering food.

I then became “Mother” to all. And today after coming so far, I have realised the fantastic work this Ahmadiyya community is doing. Some brothers were showing me in the exhibition that they are providing water,

digging wells and helping poor. I was thinking that we are doing same work! We are working for the same goal and we must try our best before this life ends. In my case I forgot my sorrows and I took sorrows of the children and became their mother. Once when I had my small daughter of ten days with me, I was begging and no one gave me anything to eat. But when I sang songs, I got something to eat. So I sang songs and people gave me food.

I said to myself that every child should be yours, you have to live for these children, this is happiness and this is the way forward. Never be unkind to anyone, my husband who had thrown stones on me, I forgave him too, I am taking care of him.

There is nothing better than a mother and nothing greater than peace. Today you have honoured me. I have lived to help children and now a thousand children have been raised, and because of these children I am here. Live and let live. If you continue giving and you will get a lot. And one thing is for sure, that God gives a lot, I know this. Who was that Sindhutai Sapkal in streets, but now I am alive. If you ever come to Poona, you must visit me. Namashkar and *Khuda Hafiz* (may God be your protector).

INTRODUCTION AND GUEST SPEAKERS

Rafiq Hayat

*National President (Amir) of the
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK*



Assalamo alaikum, may peace be upon you all. Welcome to the 12th Annual Peace Symposium which is being held on the theme of 'Religion, Freedom and Peace.'

The terrible events of Paris earlier this year shocked the world in their barbarity and the horrific killings by ISIS are playing havoc with the peace in our world. We hear so much about religion as a cause of unrest that it is truly disturbing. The truth is the killers who murdered the cartoonists in Paris and the murderers who are killing people in Syria and Iraq have no link to religion whatsoever. They have no faith and are the exact opposite of what religion stands for.

There is much speculation in the world about such issues and can be addressed and how much matters can be resolved. In the Muslim world particularly, it's a deeply worrying situation as the acts are carried out by so-called Muslims.

It may surprise you that such turn of events was prophesied by the Holy Founder of Islam 1400 years ago. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that a time would come when the religious clerics of Islam would have moved so far from its teachings that nothing would be left but in name. And how true it is that the very name of Islam is being used to kill, destroy and deny people their freedoms. However, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) also said that in such a time, a religious reformer would appear who would revive the true teachings of Islam and shine a bright light on the true compassionate nature of the religion.

We, the Ahmadiyya Muslims, believe that the Reformer has appeared and he founded our community in 1889 and his name was Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be upon him) whom we accept as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. It was his mission to return Islam to its pristine purity and

uphold the dignity of all prophets and remove misconceptions about jihad, compulsion in faith and to promote harmony for all. He was succeeded by his Caliphs and it is telling that the Caliphs have continued his spiritual revolution in peace. The community has grown to tens of millions and is now established in 206 countries of the world.

Our current Khalifa, His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, has led the global campaign for peace has addressed people and parliaments across the globe including United Kingdom, United States of America and in Europe at the European Parliament to name a few. He regularly meets heads of states, presidents and Prime Ministers, as well as faith leaders, urging the need for peace based on justice. There could be no more important message for the world today than this.

Despite his extremely busy schedule, we are delighted that he is with us tonight as our keynote speaker. His voice of peace is certainly the need of the hour and it inspires the community to serve humanity in every way by donating blood, feeding the homeless, providing education, caring for the elderly, protecting the environment and by providing water and energy for the developing world.

There is so much to do and we open our arms and our doors to all who wish to share our vision of an inclusive, respectful and harmonious world for all. It is under the guidance of His Holiness that we engage in dialogue, train our youth to serve their country, to serve humanity and that we teach and promote the values of loyalty, respect and peace – for this is the pathway to peace.

Through gatherings such as this and through people such as yourselves we draw much hope for the future. I take this opportunity to welcome you all and once again, I would like to thank you all for coming and hope this evening will be an inspiring evening for everyone present.

Siobhain McDonagh MP

Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community



Your Holiness and distinguished guests, thank you for inviting me to this Peace Symposium, the 12th to be held since they were launched in 2004 by his Holiness, following his election as the head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 2003.

My name prevents anonymity from my religion. I am a practicing Catholic and I would like to start by quoting Pope Francis when he spoke out against religious intolerance following the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris. He said,

“If my good friend says a curse word against my mother, he can expect a punch. It’s normal, you cannot provoke, you cannot insult the faith of others, you cannot make fun of the faith of others.”

We live in a world where we must be constantly vigilant. We must protect the freedom of individuals to live with dignity and follow their religious beliefs.

I applaud and support the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community with its total commitment to peace and

interfaith harmony. This commitment to peace by the worldwide Ahmadiyya Community contrasts starkly with the stance taken by some countries against it, most notably the state of Pakistan. But Pakistan is not the only country where we need to be watchful. I recently wrote to the Foreign Office, as Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, about the statement from the Gambian Supreme Islamic Council against the Ahmadi Community in Gambia. I have been assured that the British Government is following the situation closely and is involved in discussions to reduce the tension.

I support the Ahmadi aim of a separation of state and religion as I believe this is a step towards removing religious persecution in the world. By choosing Merton as the UK and worldwide headquarters for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, we are honoured to have you.

Thank you for the contribution you make to the richness and diversity of our community in Merton and in London and I thank you for inviting me to speak.

Dr Charles Tannock MEP

Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims Group



My Lords, ladies and gentlemen, Your Holiness, Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Community, as a Conservative MEP for London and chairman of the Ahmadiyya Friendship Group in the European Parliament, indeed I have developed strong links with your community over many years. In fact I have been an MEP now for 16 years.

Interacting with fellow guests tonight, attending the 12th National Peace Symposium in this beautiful headquarters of your worldwide community, the Baitul Futuh Mosque, it made me realise, that it was very evident how prosperous your community is, how charitable they are, how diligent they are and how courageous they are in

the face of adversity in many countries throughout the world.

The Ahmadiyya motto of ‘Love for All, Hatred for None’ is the truly welcome antithesis of the appalling brutal violence and the destruction perpetrated by a barbaric minority, a radical jihadist worldwide. Most notably and most recently, the alarming rise of the so called Islamic State or ISIS; it’s clear to me that such hard line Islamist sects do not represent in any way Islam as a whole nor the wider Muslim world, but sadly the Ahmadiyya communities around the world continue to be persecuted in countries as disparate as Pakistan, Indonesia, Nigeria and Kyrgyzstan. Indeed, like Siobhain, in the European Parliament I submitted a parliamentary question to the EU High Representative of Foreign Affairs, Mogdherini, highlighting the plight of the Ahmadiyyas in the Gambia who are now facing an illegitimate censure from a hard line religious organisation.

So, what is the message of peace that should

come out of this conference today? Firstly, in my mind, the answer to Islamist extremism needs to come from within moderate and reformist Muslim communities, such as the Ahmadiyya Muslims, if it is to be credible and lasting. Secondly, Europe needs to face up to the unprecedented nature of the threat from radical Jihadism. We cannot afford in our countries to lose our cohesion as societies based around our cherished and shared values such as fundamental human rights, tolerance and peaceable religious freedom, because if we do, we are very unlikely to ever win them back again.

What also impresses me most about the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in this country in particular is loyalty to Britain and integration. For that reason, I consider Ahmadis to be a great example to other faith groups of what can be achieved through faith, commitment and inter-religious dialogue – I, for the record, am a Catholic – and most importantly their strong commitment to peace itself. Thank you very much for listening to me tonight.

Lord Avebury

*Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary
Human Rights Group*



Assalamo-Alaikum. It is a great privilege for me to attend this National Peace Symposium of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, an event which enables us to come together under the wise leadership of His Holiness and to speak out for the forces of peace and of tolerance across the boundaries of politics and religion.

I am a Buddhist and the Buddha said, ‘Hatred never ceases by hatred, but by love alone is healed.’ And that statement has echoes in the principle of the Ahmadis of ‘Love for All and Hatred for None.’ But yet, we are having to confront the forces of hatred and aggression that believe in promoting hatred and inciting violence against anybody who disagrees with them. I am particularly concerned about the relentless campaign against religious minorities in Pakistan, and particularly the organised incitement

against Ahmadis by the Khatme Nabuwwat, which is condoned by the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his Muslim League-Nawaz Party. Ahmadis are already denied all rights of citizenship in Pakistan but fanatics and terrorists are not satisfied. They want to exile or exterminate them and they say so. And when they murder Ahmadis, they openly declare their responsibility on social media.

The Foreign Office lists Pakistan as a country of concern in its World Human Rights Report, published earlier this week and in which it specifically condemns the religiously motivated murder of at least 11 Ahmadis in 2014. Increasingly commentators are looking at hatred in its ideology on a wider international basis. The ‘Khatme-Nabuwwat’ has branches all over the world including the UK.

The terrorists who murder Ahmadis in Pakistan are also killing Shias, Christians and Hindus. Their ultimate objective is to religiously cleanse the state of all who disagree with their brand of fundamentalism which is similar to that of the Daesh and the Daesh has announced its plans to extend the so called caliphate into Pakistan and Afghanistan, naming individuals who were formally leading figures of the Pakistan and Afghan Taliban as the local leader and deputy leader. But the existence of a territory, described as the reincarnation of the seventh century caliphate and operating a system of governance and law based on how they view the nascent Islamic state was ruled under the rightly guided caliphs who succeeded the Prophet, has a powerful romantic attraction.

It cannot be overcome solely by military force but requires an alternative vision of Islam, such as the Ahmadiyya provides. Islam, like Christianity, has fragmented into different sects, the overwhelming majority of which believe in peaceful coexistence with other faiths and beliefs. We have to be careful in combating the Daesh that we also deal at the same

time with Islamophobia and acknowledge that the West contributed to the growth of extremism by military operations in Iraq and Libya which are widely seen as anti-Islamic.

In the case of the Afghanistan, as we remember the British servicemen who gave their lives for the creation of the present government of national unity, there is some hope that their sacrifice will ultimately lead to stability and to the elimination of the corrupt system of patronage that President Ghani has committed to removing.

But the influence of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in promoting peace in more than 200 countries and through its aid organisation, 'Humanity First', in combating poverty and disease in the developing world is immensely valuable and it's a matter of great pride to all of us that the international centre of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at is here in the UK.

We are grateful to Your Holiness and your followers for the huge contribution you make to the welfare of humanity and the example that you set for the rest of us.

Professor Heiner Bielefeldt

UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief



Your Holiness, ladies and gentlemen, grave violations of freedom of religion or belief are a reality in many parts of the world and they affect different minorities, but the situation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a special case. It's not only special because many of these violations are particularly cruel but they are also particularly far reaching. This community is not only prevented from worshipping, from running schools or charity organisations, but here we have the case that people are denied the very elementary freedom to say who they are, to say how they see themselves, to define themselves in freedom. And freedom of people to say who they are is where freedom of religion or belief begins. Without that freedom, the whole enterprise just collapses.

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What defines a religion can be contested. I mean, there is a certain space for peaceful contestation but what is not possible is that a state employs the whole arsenal of coercive measures to deny people the right to say how they see themselves in issues of religious identity.

We heard it before from other speakers like Lord Avebury, that the situation in Pakistan is particularly grave, particularly serious. The day before yesterday we had a side event in the Palais des Nations in the United Nations in Geneva. A side event organised by the International Human Rights Committee of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and I can tell you it was well attended and these issues were put on the table.

Pakistan is not the only country in which Ahmadis suffer violations of the freedom of religion or belief. It is increasingly the case in Indonesia, a country which I hope to visit and also in Kazakhstan where I had a formal country mission last year, but also in Europe, the situation is far from ideal. We had court cases, administrative decisions on asylum applications in which Ahmadis were told just keep your faith to yourself. Keep it private. So even in situations agencies in Europe were complicit in this.

I would like to conclude on a positive note however. September 2012, the European Court of Justice took a decision saying no to this practice, no to the policy of urging people to hide their beliefs. So there are in fact also good messages from the EU – I have to say this now, being here in the UK – there are sometimes good messages. But this very important clarification by the EU Court was triggered by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, by two Ahmadi cases. Congratulations!

Congratulations! The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community not only suffers but has positive contributions to the development of freedom of religion or belief. And this is not new. In 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was under discussion, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, took the podium and delivered a speech in the plenary session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, fully endorsing freedom of religion or belief, including its component of change. The right to change, which until now is a test case. He gave a very powerful speech, invoking Islam as a missionary religion, as he said, and a religion based on persuasion rather than coercion. So an Ahmadi Foreign Minister in Pakistan – now I mean this really sounds like very, very remote.

Nowadays Pakistan is a torn country, torn by religious extremism, violence, intimidation, narrow-mindedness, a climate of hysteria, impunity and blasphemy laws tightened under dictatorship. Ahmadis suffer along with many other minorities, but also members of the majority.

But the past may hold a promise for the future. It may be far-fetched, now it's inconceivable, having a Foreign Minister in Pakistan from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, but it was possible and maybe it will be possible. There is a legacy also in Pakistan, a positive legacy. Another Pakistan and parts of it is here, from various religious communities, a Pakistan that can give space to all religions. Let's hope that the past will hold a promise for a future, but not a too remote future. Thank you very much for your attention.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister for Communities



Assalamo Alaikum. It's indeed a great pleasure for me to be here once again, although I say that with a tad degree of light amusement because my regularity at this venue in the mosque for prayers, for other reasons as well, is something which I

frequent often. It was interesting to listen to Charles just now when he talked of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community as one that has led on integration, one that has led on community cohesion and perhaps there is something Divine

in that, that I have the great honour now as the minister responsible in Her Majesty's Government to do just that, to build on cohesion, between our communities, across all religions and all faiths and in this regard, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been at the cutting edge under the inspirational leadership of Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, His Holiness.

When we saw the despicable attacks in France, when we were appalled by the acts of so-called Muslims who claim to act in the name of Islam across Iraq and Syria, the voice, His Holiness raised, and community representatives across the world raised, was the voice of peace, the voice of humanity, the voice of integration, the voice of mutual respect in faith, the voice of the true Islam.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is exemplary, that it has never let circumstance dictate its course. Why? Because it has always done the right thing. Whether it is peaceful times we are living through or challenging times as we are now, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been exemplary in spreading its message of not just tolerance, because that is a basic human tenet, but also of mutual respect and understanding of all faiths.

It is a great honour for me as the Minister of Communities and Faith Engagement to work with different communities, across Britain and beyond in seeing how faiths come together. We, the Government, regard faith in society as a force for

good. When I look at different communities, across Britain, yes we have challenges and it is right as Charles said, that we stand firm in light of extremism and have those candid and frank discussions to ensure that we can eradicate this evil from society, but hand in hand with that we must also accentuate the positives of faith.

So for example, one of the initiatives that I'm pleased to launch next week will be 'Sadqa Day' which will be a Muslim-led social action day where Muslim communities up and down the country and other faith communities will come together under the banner of Sadqa, of charity, of helping all in community because they feel that this is part and parcel of what their faith instils in them.

We have had a great discussion about faith values, Muslim values, British values, human values, these are all but the same, but it is important that we all work towards the same end and in this regard when I spoke to the Prime Minister earlier today, he was delighted to have sent a very personal message on the occasion of this peace symposium [See page 20]

Huzur, it's my pleasure to be here along with colleagues from across the political divide. We stand together to ensure that the true message of peace, love and mutual respect all faiths, continues to resonate from all corners of our great country. Thank you.

Rt Hon Justine Greening MP

Secretary of State for International Development



It's a pleasure to be here, in the presence of His Holiness, Excellencies, so many MEPs, MPs and so many community leaders from around London and indeed further afield. I would like to pass on my best wishes for this evening and also those of my other Wandsworth MP colleague, Jane Ellison, who was here earlier this evening but has a family commitment which meant she couldn't stay for this event.

I think this is a particularly special event. Over

a decade we have been having this important conference and I think I have been to it pretty much every year and it's grown and gone from strength to strength in that time.

I would echo the words of other speakers already this evening in really paying tribute to the work of the Ahmadiyya Community, not just here in the UK and in my own local community but worldwide. His Holiness, is a tireless advocate for peace in such a conflict ridden world. The

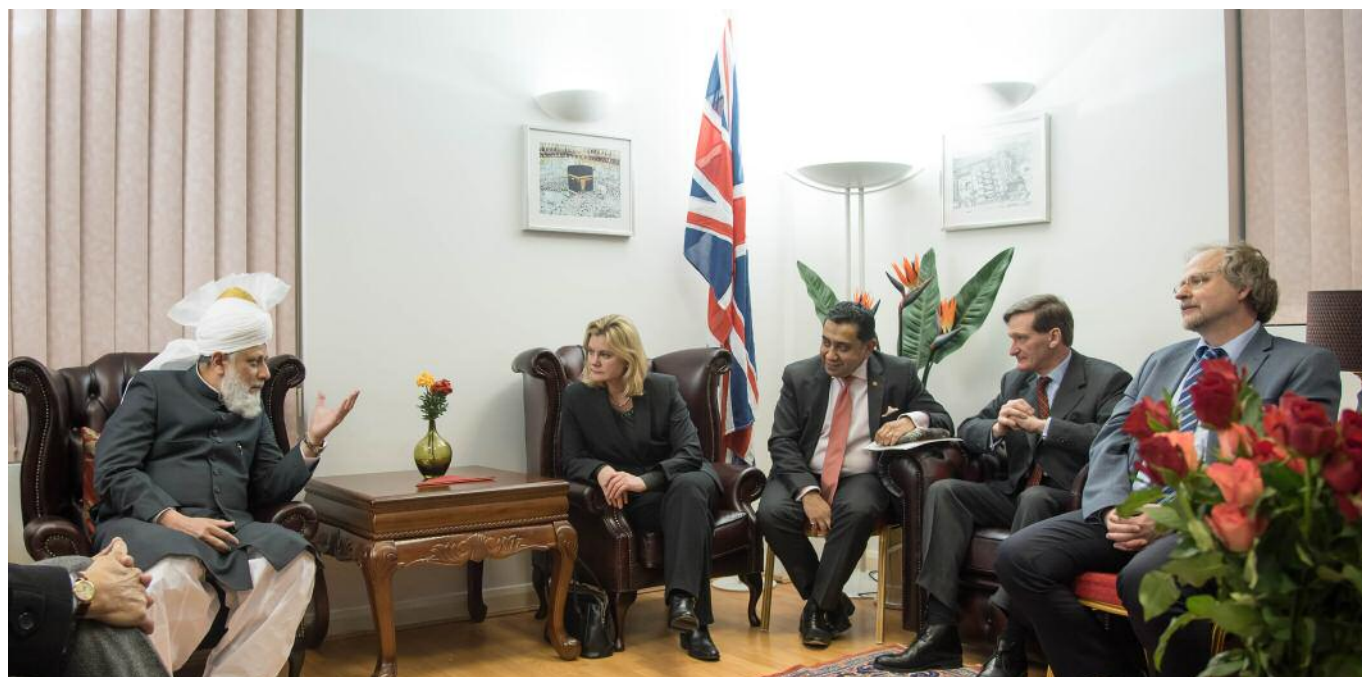
Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Organisation, is a fantastic beacon for everything that is fantastic about young people, certainly in this country and the work that it does, to raise so many funds for the good causes including, 'Humanity First', something which is very close to my heart and also my interest as Secretary of State for International Development.

I think we all recognise the persecution that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community faces in so many parts of our world and the need to stand up against that persecution and challenges. In my role of Secretary State of International Development, we often are involved in responding to how conflict and humanitarian emergencies affect people on the ground and many of those people, increasingly in places like Syria, Lebanon or Jordan, or ones who have been affected by extremism. I really just wanted to point out that often the first casualties of extremism are women and women's rights and in many respects, I think when people are able to relegate one human being, often a woman, to something that is lesser in them, then in their mind they have crossed a rubicon, and then it is so easy to then add others to that list, whether they have a different faith, a different gender,

whether it's a different sexuality, anything really. That list can grow and I think we should stand up for human rights.

My final message really was a much more local one as a local MP; I think the role that the Ahmadiyya Community plays in London but certainly closer to home in my own community is an absolutely vital one. In these days of discussions around how we can tackle extremism, how we can make sure that as an entire community, we work together, from my perspective, the work that the Ahmadiyya Community does, not just in important evenings like tonight but more broadly on a day to day basis, reaching out across the community to pull it together, I think it's absolutely vital and I think it deserves to be properly recognised.

So I really wanted to finish by saying thank you for all of that work. I very much value my relationship with the community, which began before I was an MP, but since being elected it's really gone from strength to strength. It's a relationship which I place huge amount of value on and I hope over the coming months and years, it continues to go from strength to strength. Thank you.



Meeting with His Holiness from left to right: Rt. Hon Justine Greening MP (Secretary of State for International Development, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon (Minister for Communities), Rt Hon Dominic Grieve QC MP (former Attorney General) and Professor Heiner Bielefeldt (UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief).

Messages of Support



THE PRIME MINISTER



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

I am delighted to send my best wishes to everyone taking part in this year's National Peace Symposium. I know this important event will bring together people of different faiths, countries and backgrounds with the shared aims of rejecting violence, furthering peace and promoting harmony.

This year's Symposium is the latest demonstration of how the worldwide Ahmadiyya community – under the leadership of His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad – works tirelessly to bring about peace and tolerance between religions, nations and peoples.

At this time I would like to commend the Ahmadiyya community for everything they do for the UK. You are a shining example of why Britain is the successful multi-faith, multi-ethnic democracy that it is.

I wish everyone taking part in this year's Symposium an informative and insightful event, and I have no doubt it will inspire all those attending. Let the values of the Ahmadiyya community - love for all, hatred for none – ring out far beyond the beautiful Baitul Futuh Mosque allowing peoples of different beliefs and backgrounds around the world to live in harmony and peace.



13 March 2015



DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
70 WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AS

From the Deputy Prime Minister

6 March 2015

At a time of huge global uncertainty, the commitment of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to secure greater peace across the world remains as steadfast as ever.

The work of His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad and Ahmadiyya Muslims in every area of our society to promote tolerance, respect and understanding is invaluable. I want to thank them for their dedication, kindness and engagement.

Their example is one which people of all faiths and none can celebrate. As you host this year's Peace Symposium, discussing some of the world's greatest challenges, we stand with you.

Together, we want a world where everyone, whatever their background or circumstances, can live the happy, successful life they deserve, free from fear, persecution or violence.

This is our vision for the future: a stronger economy and fairer society for all people.

I want to wish His Holiness and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community the very best for a constructive and fruitful conference.

Your sincerely,
Nick Clegg
NICK CLEGG



Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP,
Deputy Prime Minister



Rt Hon William Hague MP,
First Secretary of State
and Leader of the House of
Commons*



**Office of the Leader
of the House of Commons**

1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Tel: 020 7276 1005
Fax: 020 7276 1006
leader@commonsleader.x.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: TO327372

16 February 2015

National Peace Symposium

As individuals we form part of many different communities. Communities based on beliefs, based on faith, based on shared experience. Our communities help us form identities, provide support in tough times and help us form friendships and bonds. But no matter what we do, what we believe or who we are, we are all linked as members of a worldwide community. As ever, this is fittingly reflected in this year's National Peace Symposium.

I warmly welcome the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association's work to build trust and mutual respect between communities. You can be proud of your achievements to build peace and raise millions of pounds for charitable commitments.

I am sorry I cannot be with you on 14 March, and I wish you every future success.

William Hague

Rt Hon William Hague MP
First Secretary of State and Leader of the House of Commons

Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK
Baitul Futuh Mosque
181 London Road
Morden, SM4 5PT

The 2015 National Peace Symposium



Meeting with members of the British press



Meeting with members of the Asian press

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.alislam.org • www.mta.tv

Email: ExternalAffairs@ahmadiyya.org.uk

Twitter: @AhmadiyyaUK