

Islamic Human Rights Commission



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In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

THE AIMS OF THE ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

- To champion the rights and duties revealed for human beings.

- To promote a new social and international order, based on truth, justice, righteousness and generosity, rather than self-interest.

- To demand virtue and oppose wrongdoing in the exercise of power (from whatever base that power derives - e.g. political, judicial, media, economic, military, personal, etc.).

- To gather information about, and to publicise, atrocities, oppression, discrimination, and other abuses of divinely-granted rights.

- To campaign for redress, and to support the victims of such crimes.

- To campaign to bring the perpetrators and their accomplices to justice.

- To cooperate with other groups and individuals where such cooperation is likely to further the achievement of these aims.

The Islamic Human Rights Commission is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

TIME TO STAND UP FOR OURSELVES



Photo: © Press Association

'Muslims are becoming to Britain what the Jews were to Nazi Germany'

The past year has once again been dominated by the government's efforts to assimilate Britain's Muslim community.

Emboldened by the largely timid reactions that have greeted the implementation of previous measures, the Tory-led coalition government stayed on the offensive, adding to the mountain of laws that already exist aimed at engineering a socially liberal and politically compliant Muslim community.

The Trojan Horse scandal in Birmingham, found to be fabricated and amplified by the Zionist, neo-con, former education minister Michael Gove, to fabricate a national anti-Muslim panic about extremism, provided

the government with a concocted mandate to extend its indoctrination agenda into the nation's schools.

Henceforth schools would be required to inculcate and reinforce 'British' values in addition to maintaining their recently-acquired role of policing pupils for signs of extremism under the PREVENT programme. The focus on British values in response to unfounded accusations of Muslim extremism implies that they are either incompatible with Islam or that Muslims cannot be trusted to uphold them. More disturbingly, rather than being independently thought out, British values are being defined in opposition to Islam.

The perceived need to subject all Muslims to more stringent

policing was again exposed when a report by the thinktank Claystone revealed that the charities regulator, the Charity Commission, had labelled 55 charities with the issue code "extremism and radicalisation" without their knowledge, in the period 5 December 2012 to 8 May 2014. These charities were/are being monitored as a potential concern for matters relating to extremism and radicalisation. Since there are no written criteria for applying or removing this label it lends itself to non-evidence based targeting of Muslim groups, a concern borne out by a Guardian study which showed that of all the investigations being carried out by the Commission from April 2012 until November 2014 more than 20 percent were of Muslim

organisations.

The government's resolve to deal with Muslims as a security problem (instead of citizens to be served on an equal footing) was again in evidence when it awarded £8m to the Charity Commission and gave it wide-reaching new powers to confront 'extremism'. It followed the appointments to the board of the Commission of Peter Clarke, the former head of Scotland Yard's Counter Terrorism Command and William Shawcross, a board member of the pro-Zionist Anglo-Israel Association whose views on Islam are best summed up in his 2012 statement that "Europe and Islam is one of the greatest, most terrifying problems of our future. I think all

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Live on IHRC TV

www.ihrc.tv

IHRC TV has progressed this year with regular live events on www.ihrc.tv being broadcast and later added to our Youtube channel www.youtube.com/user/IHRCtv Highlights from this year include the following:



Sara Russell's Exhibition 'Another Day'



What now for Europe? The instrumentalisation of the Paris attacks: Arzu Merali



Genocide Memorial Day 2015: Introduction - Ahmed Uddin (right)



Author evening with M.G.Khan (right) : 'Young Muslims, Pedagogy and Islam. Contexts and concepts'



Continued from page 1

European countries have vastly, very quickly growing Islamic populations."

Unfortunately it did not end there. There came the Counter Terrorism and Security Act - perhaps the most nefarious anti-extremism legislation to date - which turned the hitherto voluntary requirement for service providers such as medics and teachers to police clients for extremism into a compulsory one. Their incorporation into the state security apparatus means that individuals can now be monitored for signs of radicalisation from the cradle to the grave.

IHRC noted at the time that the Act effectively extends the criminalisation of publicly expressed political views to religious views. Those who dismissed as alarmist our fears that the new legislation targeted religious beliefs would not have to wait long to see the error of their ways.

Last May, IHRC found itself intervening in the case of a predominantly Muslim school in Leytonstone, East London, after its pupils were issued with questionnaires soliciting their views on a range of issues and hypothetical cases designed to tease out any "extremist" tendencies. The school asked a series of highly loaded questions which seem to be based on a perception of extremism and radicalisation held by right-wing neo-cons.

Following its general election victory in May the incoming Tory government announced plans to introduce yet more anti-extremism laws including powers to close down groups and premises (mosques are not exempt) found to be propagating or promoting so-called extremist values. As usual no definition of extremism was advanced, arguably leaving the way open for laws that will enable officials to exercise an Islamophobic discretion in their application. The Tories also pledged to combat so-called 'entryism' in which people (read Muslims) seek to take advantage of democratic rules and processes to take over institutions, which is what the government alleges happened in the Birmingham schools controversy.

For Muslims these and the raft of other measures that have preceded them should leave no doubt that they are becoming to Britain what the Jews were to Nazi Germany. Whether it is the tropes about minority communities seeking political domination, the desire to exclude or at least severely limit the involvement of practising

Muslims in public life, criminalising Islamic beliefs, religious practices and institutions, the orchestrated media demonisation or the concerted government attempt to recast them in a secularised liberal mould, everything points to the systematic marginalisation of Muslims and the institutionalisation of a second class status for them in modern Britain.

'It behoves us as a community appointed by the Almighty to stand as "witnesses for mankind" to reject oppression and stand firm against injustice to the best of our ability'

It's a pessimistic picture. The government juggernaut, egged on by an increasingly xenophobic and Islamophobic mass media, rolls relentlessly forward. In the face of such widespread hostility from the political and chattering classes it is perhaps unsurprising to find many taking the view that resistance is futile. Too many Muslims have either conceded defeat, retiring into the shadows to carry on working quietly in the spaces left by the government squeeze or, out of naivety or temptation, accepted or joined up with the government's 'anti-extremism' agenda.

IHRC refuses to accept these are the only alternatives. We believe that without speaking truth to power, our situation and that of wider society would undoubtedly be far worse. When we as Muslims defend our own rights it is not simply about self-preservation and defending our way of life, we are also upholding the fundamental rights of wider society. Make no mistake, the erosion of our rights also represents an attack on the rights of everybody else. We have seen that with the Extradition Act 2003 under which not only Muslims but many non Muslims have been transferred to face prosecution in the US for crimes they have allegedly committed at home. It has also been the case in anti-terrorism legislation where for example the Schedule 7 power, although disproportionately used against

Muslims and other minorities, has been employed by the state to try and prevent journalists such as Glenn Greenwald from publishing material that compromises officials.

It behoves us as a community appointed by the Almighty to stand as "witnesses for mankind" to reject oppression and stand firm against injustice to the best of our ability. As this newsletter outlines IHRC does this in a number of ways and across a wide range of areas. While many of our activities are necessarily reactive and driven by events, we believe it is vital to challenge injustices in a strategic manner by setting the agenda and trying to effect change proactively by shaping public and political opinion so that the decisions that are ultimately made may reflect the concerns and needs of the Muslim community. One example of this is our acclaimed research department which is at the forefront of documenting the nature and extent of Islamophobia in the western world through its Hate Crime Project. Based on empirical data, the project has so far produced reports on France, USA, Canada, and the UK where a second report is about to be released (the findings suggest that Islamophobia has got a lot worse since 2011 when the first survey was conducted).

Another example is the comparatively less publicised work we do to challenge the growing scourge of sectarianism in the Ummah, primarily through our position as chair of the Universal Justice Network, an alliance of Muslim NGOs. In the 18 years since its inception our 'Charter 3:103' initiative, based on the 103rd Quranic verse in the third chapter of the Quran exhorting the believers to stay united, has gathered momentum. After the historic Pakistan declaration in 2013 in which Pakistani leaders from various Islamic schools of thought signed up to a unity pact, in 2014 the focus shifted to Malaysia and Indonesia where meetings were convened with civil society, political and religious leaders to discuss and agree ways of preventing sectarian narratives from infecting their populations.

The task facing us is enormous but rather than being discouraged or daunted by it we should find motivation in the many challenges it presents. The myriad problems facing us as a community requires a commitment from all of us that is rooted in a genuine desire to seek the betterment of the Ummah and the world at large. As a community we have the necessary resources, all that is lacking is the collective will.

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**Conference:
Genocide Memorial
Day 2015**



IHRC held their annual Genocide Memorial Day conference on 18 January 2015 for the 5th year running since its inception in 2010. Every year attendance grows, as does global media attention and reporting from it, and this year GMD continued to grow as a global event with Jerusalem, Amsterdam, Paris and Brussels joining in with simultaneous events. The conference opened with a message of solidarity from Sandew Hira in Amsterdam expressing the importance of holding this conference at the current time. Maria Lera – an academic specializing in Psychology from Seville – made a fascinating contribution as she spoke about the treatment of Muslims and Jews in the defeat of Islamic Andalusia and its parallels with the Holocaust in Nazi Germany. Rabbi Cohen from Neturei Karta explained that the current Zionist state of Israel is far from what

Orthodox Jews consider to be a legitimate state according to the Jewish scripture. He was followed by the writer Matt Carr. He explicitly stated the value of using history as a tool and drawing parallels with the present day. This was clearly expressed in his discussion of the oppression of the Morisco peoples in post Islamic Andalusia who were harassed and forced to assimilate till they were eventually expelled from Spain. Law graduate and writer Xain Storey made a profound statement on the genocide against First Nation peoples in North America – a nation built on the bones of millions of indigenous peoples. The systematic oppression against them occurs to this day. A spoken word performance was also given by Hodan Yusuf as she detailed the steps leading to genocides - steps that have been trodden time and time again.

Event:

Upcoming conference to dissect pernicious Prevent strategy

IHRC's Institutional Islamophobia conference in December 2014 discussed the many ways in which government institutions consciously create and socially engineer negative perceptions of Muslims and Islam and in doing so generate Islamophobia. The government's Prevent strategy was certainly a hot topic at the conference for many speakers and members of the audience and certainly is a worrying issue that desperately needs special attention.

As a result, IHRC, together with Campaign Against Criminalising Communities, is organising a conference to address the government's Prevent programme.

For several years, the Home Office has funded a programme supposedly to 'Prevent Violent Extremism'. The rationale is that people who espouse 'non-violent extremism' create an environment in which terrorists can operate and encourage 'violent extremism'. Therefore entire Muslim communities must be monitored for 'extremist' ideas. There are defined as anything that represents hostility to 'British values'. This phrase conflates universal human values with the British state, whose foreign

policy regularly contradicts such ideals. In practice, those who criticise UK foreign policy have been treated as

ways in which people can undermine the state's efforts to enforce the programme. A number of notable aca-

delivered by Arun Kundnani. Currently based at New York University, Arun Kundnani writes about race, Islamophobia, political violence and surveillance. A former editor of the journal Race & Class, he was educated at Cambridge University and holds a PhD from London Metropolitan University. His latest book The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, extremism, and the domestic War on Terror, published in March 2014, is available at the IHRC Bookshop.

Prevent monitors all Muslims for 'extremist' ideas

'extremists' by the Prevent programme.

This has spread fear within Muslim communities, as well as among voluntary organisations and public employees who are expected to implement the programme. It is also given a statutory basis by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill.

Thus the aim of the conference is to raise issues, deliver presentations and papers as well as explore ways of challenging the government's Prevent programme. In particular, the purpose is to discuss what the Prevent programme actually prevents and protects, how organisations and public employees should respond to its pressures, how all individuals can collectively resist its attacks on free debate and explore possible

demics and activists will be speaking such as Patricia McManus, member of UCU National Executive Committee and Secretary of Brighton University UCU; Leory Logan, founder and Chairman of REALITY and Cerie Bullivant, CAGE UK. Last but certainly not least, the keynote speech will be

• The conference will take place on Saturday 13 June at The Waterlily, 69-89 Mile End Road, London E1 4TT starting 2pm. A free lunch will be provided.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Once again we are approaching the holy month of Ramadan for which we are thankful and pray to Allah SWT that we are able to fully benefit from this glorious month. We are also aware of the growing pressures, responsibilities and challenges that face us both nationally and internationally. As much as these pressures are becoming increasingly daunting, as Muslims we believe that Allah SWT will not test us beyond our capabilities and therefore we need to be confident in ourselves as much as Allah SWT is confident in us.

Internationally we are seeing the rise of violence, injustices and

oppression against people, especially against Muslim communities in places like Palestine, Kashmir, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Myanmar and elsewhere. We have also seen the recent barbaric acts of

What we have to do is stand up for justice and the rights of the oppressed, no matter whom or where they are and regardless of their faith or religion.

Daesh (the Islamic State) being committed in the name of Islam, supported and financed by enemies of Islam and humanity as a means of further demonising not just Muslims, but also our deen.

Furthermore, in recent months we have witnessed the Israeli-style bombardment of Yemen – the poorest country in the region being obliterated by the richest. We are currently seeing basic food and medical supplies being denied to

**Massoud Shadjareh
Chair, Islamic Human
Rights Commission**

Yemeni civilians.

What we have to do is stand up for justice and the rights of the oppressed, no matter whom or where they are and regardless of their faith or religion. It is our duty to ensure that there will be no justification for attacking and abusing innocent civilians. We need to rise up to guarantee that the basic needs of our fellow Muslims and human beings are met. We cannot and should not compromise the Islamic principles of protecting civilians and indeed even our environment in times of conflict. To fail to do so will make us party to the transgressions and barbarism to which people around the world are being subjugated.

Nationally, we are seeing the ugly head of Islamophobia and hatred against Muslims being established on a daily basis. The demonisation and stereotyping of Muslims, and indeed Islam, as a source of terrorism and violence has given excuses to the government and wider colonial powers to introduce policies designed to socially engineer their preferred version of Islam, destroying and vilifying the very fabric of our belief and commitment to faith.

British government legislation for fighting so-called extremism, which has never been defined, is one of the many tools being used against the Muslim community. We are told this is not just a war against extremism, but also against non-violent extrem-

ism. The recent elections expose the fallacy that the political system is capable of addressing the legitimate needs and aspirations of the Muslim community in Britain.

We need to be self-critical here and hold to account those in our community who help uphold this status quo. Once and for all we need to understand our political activity and recognise that our engagement is needed more than once every four years. We must actively go and lobby those candidates who promise heaven on earth just to be elected. There is no short cut to effectively organising our own community to ensure there is a clear understanding of the aims and objectives we must achieve.

We must construct a community not just interested in its own wellbeing but one that wants to create a better and just society for all. We are not Muslim nationalists; we do not behave like Muslim nationalists. We should be passionate for the eradication of injustice, poverty and aim to empower ourselves. We need to work to create a better economical, political and social environment for everyone. But before we can do that we need to understand these concepts ourselves, strive to participate in grass roots activism, and be confident that with the help and support of Allah SWT we can achieve miracles, not just illusions. Let us unite in bringing change and creating a better society for all.

For more information of our publications and access to reports and briefings, please log on to our website

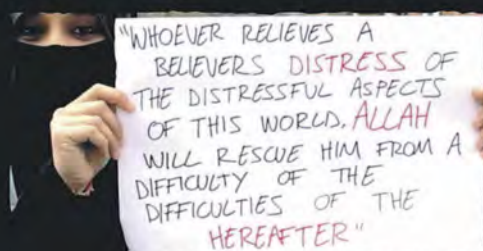
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**Islamic
Human Rights
Commission**

HHUGS

PROVIDING PRACTICAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE TO HOUSEHOLDS DEVASTATED BY THE ARREST OF A FAMILY MEMBER UNDER UK ANTI-TERROR LEGISLATION



IHRC ADVOCACY SUPPORTS VICTIMS OF DRACONIAN ANTI-TERROR MEASURES

The counter-terrorism legislation passed earlier this year and the new, more drastic proposals on their way with the Conservative government are indicative of the state's attempt to target Muslims in every aspect of our lives.

Many of us are aware already of the Prevent programme and its intention to 'de-radicalise' Muslims believed to be at risk of 'extremism'. The way it was implemented in the past was to fund activities in largely Muslim areas around the country, which have functioned as a brainwashing exercise, aiming to transform young Muslim children into agents of the state spouting nationalist rhetoric.

The new Prevent powers are even more stringent, making it a duty of every local authority, school, NHS provider, social services team, etc to identify individuals at risk of 'extremism'. That means every service provider in the country must monitor for signs of 'extremism' those to whom they are providing a service. The definition of 'extremism' is broad, but includes opposition to 'fundamental British values'. Because this is a term that has the capacity to change in definition over time and in different contexts, it has the potential to be applied to every Muslim in the country. That Prevent targets primarily Muslims is clear in the guidance,

which makes numerous references to Muslims and 'Islamists', with only a cursory nod towards far right extremism, the latter of which is actually on the rise across Europe.

So it is clear then that Prevent is part of a strategy of criminalising Muslim communities, and encouraging an environment of fear and anxiety about whether or not we will be subjected to the label of 'extremist'. Because once the service provider identifies someone as 'at risk' (according to the malleable definition), the Prevent guidelines then indicate that the individual will be referred to a panel with a police officer (despite no criminal offence having been committed), to determine whether or not they should then be referred to a programme of 'de-radicalisation', where the individual will be indoctrinated to accept 'fundamental British values'. IHRC is particularly concerned by the way schools are being targeted, and that they have adopted this mode of operation astonishingly quickly due to the heightened climate of fear.

Where Prevent has got the minutiae of individuals' lives covered, the new powers given to the Charity Commission means that the majority of Muslim organisations will also be closely monitored. The powers allow for the Commission to close bank

accounts, seize computers, monitor the organisation for extended periods of time, and also shut them down. Ninety-five percent of Muslim organisations are charities, and statistics show they are disproportionately targeted by the Commission. With the new head of the Commissions' links to neo-conservative organisations like the Henry Jackson Society, and his comments presenting Islam as the greatest threat to Europe, it is clear that the government's agenda is to keep close tabs on all Muslims at all times.

IHRC is working across departments to challenge Prevent where possible. We are running campaigns and doing research on what the programme entails and how it will be implemented. The advocacy department in particular will be taking on cases of individuals who are being targeted by these measures, supporting them throughout the process, and challenging the need for their engagement in Prevent in the first place. We are also working closely with expert human rights lawyers on this, and if necessary can refer cases to them to challenge decisions in the courts.

If you or anyone you know is being subjected to scrutiny under the Prevent programme, please contact IHRC Advocacy for help and advice.

Lena Mohamed

FREE ADVICE SURGERIES

Islamic Human Rights Commission offers free weekly Information and Advice surgeries every Wednesdays. Our professional caseworkers can provide people with information and advice on a whole range of issues.

Our service is confidential, independent and free.

When are the surgeries?

Every Wednesdays 5pm-7pm

Appointments can be made and will be available in 20 minute sessions.

What issues will the surgeries cover?

The advice surgeries will provide advice on:

- Employment
- Benefits
- Discrimination
- Complaints against the Police

If our caseworkers are unable to provide advice on any issue you will be signposted as appropriate.

Where are the surgeries?

The surgeries will be held at Islamic Human Rights Commissions office in Wembley: 202 Preston Road, Wembley HA9

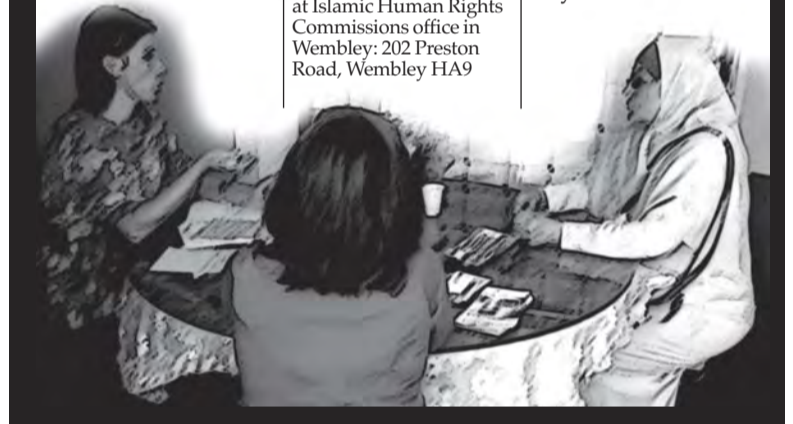
8PA. Closest tube station is Preston Road station on the Metropolitan line.

How much will it cost?

All advice given at the advice surgery is free of charge.

If you are interested and would like to book an appointment, then please call Islamic Human Rights Commission on 0208 904 4222.

Please note, as there are limited sessions on offer, they will be available on a first come, first served basis but we will try and offer you the next available date if they are fully booked.



Abdullah was asked by his boss 'is that a toilet brush on your face?'

So he contacted IHRC for advice

Abdullah worked for a major corporation, from the very beginning of his employment he was subjected to ridicule and discrimination because of his faith. Colleagues used to offer him pork to mock him.

IHRC helped Abdullah challenge his employers for the way he was treated by colleagues and managers. His employers offered him £30,000 as a settlement for his complaint.

Contact us if you think you have been a victim of discrimination at work.

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Bookshop & Gallery go from strength to strength

It has been another eventful year for the IHRC Bookshop & Gallery. We've successfully kept up the hosting of our stellar author evenings, featuring new and latest titles written by top academics. The Gallery has seen two exhibitions by dynamic artists enjoy splendid runs, with many people viewing them. Most importantly however, we have strived to maintain our ethos of bringing the public the best decolonial and anti-imperial literature we can, and disseminating knowledge that challenges people to critically rethink socio-political structures.

Our materials at the Bookshop have continued to garner praise. In addition to maintaining our links with publishers from round the world such as Citizens International we have since improved much of our inventory. These include our sections on Critical Thinking, Islamic Studies, History and Representation Theory. The Bookshop now boasts books on and from the likes of Garvey and Ibn Arabi to Zizek and Finkelstein. Also improved is our section on books about

Islamophobia, boosted by the success of our own IHRC Publications. The latest of these is the insightful and alarming 'Only Canadian: The Experience of Hate Moderated Differential Citizenship for Muslims'.

Our children's books as ever remain a favourite, particularly for the local community. With

overseas books from Iran on 'The Stories of the Shanemah' to teen tales of street gangs and fast cars by Nai'ma B. Robert, the new stock we have is testament to our willingness to cater to all.

Our artwork and ornaments have also proven an important staple for the Bookshop & Gallery. For instance our hand-

crafted turquoise plates and vases from Esfahan have been a big hit for those looking for a distinctive style. Our artwork persists in both beautifying spaces as well as delivering a poignant message.

Art available now includes explosive new art of Malcolm X from the mastermind behind last year's Intifada Street exhibition; Muhammad Hamza.

Staying with the theme of artwork, our exhibition 'Layers of Paradise' ran from October 2014 to January 2015. By artist and designer Romina Khanom it featured an eclectic mix of sculptures and installations inspired by stencil art and Arabesque geometry, with the intended effect of creating art that was spiritual in both form and aesthetic.

Our most recent exhibition was the brilliant 'Visions of the Future' by OOMK (One of My Kind). An independent publications collective, OOMK showed us their out-of-the-box artistry when they transformed our gallery into their own zine-based reading room! The room showcased books that discussed a diverse range of socio-political and religious topics.

To match our enlightening exhibitions we felt we had to

have equally enlightening author evenings. That's certainly what we had in November 2014 when Salman Sayyid joined us to discuss his latest book 'Recalling the Caliphate' in which he discussed everything from demands for Muslim autonomy to the decolonisation process within the Muslim world.

Also in November we hosted Katy Sian for her second event at IHRC, this time discussing her new book; 'Conversations in Postcolonial Thought'. Katy delivered a fascinating recounting of the book, a compendium of conversations with different postcolonial thinkers that takes in everything from Fanon to the War on Terror.

In February 2015 we hosted academic M.G Khan as he discussed his latest book 'Young Muslims, Pedagogy & Islam'. Khan extensively communicated how and why Muslim youth are feeling disadvantaged, and effectively charts his own theoretical framework for Muslim youth work.

With new exhibitions on the horizon as well as many new author events, the Bookshop & Gallery look forward to hosting these and many new events, as well as bringing our mobile bookstalls to talks and conferences across the country. If you are an author, artist or filmmaker and would like to organise an event at our shop please contact us at shop@ihrc.org or 02089044222.

Kamal Khan



Research:

Hate crime projects

IHRC's innovative work on Islamophobia is expanding. 2015 will not only be seeing the publication and launch of IHRC's second report on anti-Muslim hate crime and discrimination in the UK but also similar projects are being undertaken in Germany and France.

Undoubtedly, acts of Islamophobia and hatred against Muslims have increased alarmingly since IHRC's previous pilot

report in the UK in 2009-10 (published in 2011), and anti-Muslim discriminatory rhetoric is certainly becoming more and more accepted. Arzu Merali, Director of Research and co-founder of IHRC and Saied R. Ameli, Professor of Communications and North American Studies, University of Tehran, identified the problem of underreporting of anti-Muslim hate crimes and thus the need to take leadership in providing regu-



'there is a disturbingly clear surge in anti-Muslim discrimination and hate crime activity since our last report in 2011'

lar statistics to governments and/or local authorities so that they can understand the problems that Muslims face in the UK.

The survey methodology, the Domination Hate Model of Intercultural Relations (DHMIR) created by Professor Ameli, was piloted in the 2009-10 study and was utilised in this project. The DHMIR addresses the reality that hate is mobilised by institutional bodies of governance and constructed with the intention of generating negative reactions from the hating society on the hated society.

The fieldwork began early 2014 with the distribution of quantitative and qualitative questionnaires in all regions of the UK – electronic and hard copies – which were dispersed in accordance with the size of the Muslim population in each area to consider the effect of demographic values on such hate crimes. IHRC received over 1500 completed questionnaires, among them 717 conducted online and the remaining in print format, from all boroughs of London to small towns in Scotland. The distribution finally came to a close in

November 2014.

Some of the findings have been released and there is a disturbingly clear surge in anti-Muslim discrimination and hate crime activity since our last report in 2011. Among its findings, 82.1% of Muslims or perceived Muslims surveyed had witnessed or heard Islamophobia being directed towards someone else in comparison to 57.1% in 2011, and a monstrous 93.3% of respondents have experienced seeing negative stereotypes of Muslims in the media in comparison to 66.9% in 2011. Furthermore, one particular aspect of hostility against Muslims which is becoming increasingly worrying is education, whether it is higher/further education or the primary/secondary schools setting. 45.8% of those surveyed experienced discrimination in an educational setting whereas in 2011, 37.2% had experienced such prejudice.

Anti-Muslim hatred is not restricted to the UK. The situation for Muslims is worsening in Europe as well which is why we are undertaking the research study in Germany and France this

year. We will be using slightly modified versions of the qualitative and quantitative questionnaires to suit the current situation in France/Germany and have had them translated into not only French and German, but also Arabic and Turkish.

Our previous reports on Germany (Germany, Muslims, Civil Society and Citizenship, 2010) and France (France and the Hated Society: Muslim Experiences, 2012) provide a healthy background in understanding the climate for Muslims in Europe. Recent events such as the Charlie Hebdo incident and the growing popularity of groups like PEGIDA emphasise the pervasive nature of Islamophobic discrimination. Through the research studies, IHRC will be able to deal with underreporting, provide regular statistics to governments and local authorities and build a historical picture of anti-Muslim experiences in different countries.

The launch of the new and updated UK report will take place in autumn 2015.

Ashiya Mendheria

Have you been verbally abused, harassed, discriminated against or even violently attacked because you are a Muslim?

Have you been mistreated by the police or security services or are you a victim of anti-terror laws?

Please contact us by emailing advocacy@ihrc.org or telephone 020 8904 4222

All information given by you will be held in the strictest confidence and in accordance with data protection laws.

Al Quds Day 2015



An estimated 9000 protesters marched to the US Embassy on Friday, 25 July 2014 as part of the Al Quds Day demonstration. The annual event was mirrored across the world with major cities such as New York, Cape Town and Sydney all hosting mass protests of their own. Held on the last Friday of the month of Ramadan, it is a day to stand shoulder to shoulder with oppressed people in the world against their oppressors; to stand in particular with Palestinians who are largely being ignored by the powers that be in the West.

The Al Quds Committee that organized the protest of which the IHRC is a component part pursued a concerted and well organized media campaign to raise awareness of Al Quds Day and the related issues, especially the tragic events in Gaza currently. Two poster campaigns were run, one in regards to '5 Reasons you should protest at Al Quds', and another one advertising the event more generally. This year also

saw TV channels reporting on the protest itself, including RT, Press TV and several other channels which all contributes towards developing a more representative and sympathetic media towards the Palestinian peoples struggle.

This general media campaign is especially important as the 'western' mainstream media narrative is pumping out a narrative that this is a 'war' and that 'both sides are to blame' which is scandalous considering the profoundly skewed nature of the situation whereby one side has tanks, fighter jets, a world class navy, and the other Palestinian side has some relatively primitive rockets with no explosive pay load.

Though it rained heavily and repeatedly throughout the day, crowds persisted. Many understood the gravity of the situation with the continuously rising toll of Palestinian casualties in Gaza – majority being innocent civilians. Protestors booted the likes of McDonalds and Starbucks as the march

winded its way through Oxford Street – calling out their support of Israel and condemning them.

The rally took place just outside the US Embassy as the US still remains Israel's fiercest ally, contributing to the onslaught on Gaza. Speakers included Massoud Shadjareh of the Islamic Human Rights Commission who gave an impassioned rallying cry; Roland Rance from Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods who pointed out Israel's blatant lies; John Rees from Stop the War who referred to Israel's actions as "a war crime against civilians" and Foad Shatt from the Union of Palestinian Students UK who clearly pointed out that "occupation and peace are incompatible."

IHRC Chair Massoud Shadjareh said: "Since politicians and media are ignoring the injustice of brutal war crimes being committed against innocent civilians in Gaza it is incumbent upon us to support for the victims." The day successfully united people from all creeds and religions in that ethos.

Legal department expansion helps more clients

IHRC Legal has made significant strides since being established in 2014.

We have now expanded our range of legal services from Employment and Discrimination law to UK Immigration Law.

IHRC Legal is now an Office of the Immigration Services Commission (OISC) firm accredited at Level 3, which is the highest level possible. We advise on the full range of immigration applications to the Home Office, including but not limited to:

- Entry Clearance Applications
- Leave to Remain
- Indefinite Leave to Remain / EEA permanent residency
- EEA Registration Certificates / Residence cards
- Asylum and Human Rights applications
- Citizenship Applications – Naturalisation & Registration
- Applications for Immigration Bail
- Applications for replacement status documents or biometric residence permits / removal of conditions on leave to remain
- Preparation of and representation at Appeal hearings

Almost immediately, IHRC Legal's immigration experts were able to help a client fleeing an abusive relationship with her children encumbered by her precarious immigration status. Her previous representative left a lot to be desired by advising her to make an application that was not beneficial for her in the long term, charging a large fee in the process.

We were able to give her sound advice that resulted in outcomes that were in her best interests and that of her children. Furthermore, we ensured that the client, given her financial difficulties, would not have to pay the exorbitant Home Office fee as we had we successfully argued that the Home Office should apply their fee waiver policy. The client now has the right to remain in the UK with her children, and work, study and access the welfare state.

IHRC legal has continued to secure successful outcomes for clients who come to us seeking redress for racial and/or religious discrimination. Last February we helped a black university lecturer who was left to rot on a 'zero hours' contract as white colleagues around her moved onto more secure and rewarding contracts.

The lecturer was employed by a well-known London university on a contract that did not guarantee her any work. She had endured the onerous terms for six years before finally plucking up the courage to bring a claim for racial discrimination.

Her numerous requests to be moved onto the conventional 'fractional' contract had fallen on deaf ears and her multiple job applications had all been unsuccessful, despite the fact that she was demonstrably more qualified than the successful applicants.

IHRC's legal department agreed to take up the employee's case and help secure an out of court settlement which included a substantial lump sum in compensation for injury to feelings as well as a contract of employment containing the terms and conditions she was entitled to.

Our aim is to provide a high quality legal advice service at an affordable rate. If you or someone you know would like to discuss any employment or immigration matter please contact us on legal@ihrc.org or 020 8904 4222.

Mushtak Ahmed

Fatima was in an abusive relationship and her immigration status was precarious.

So she contacted IHRC Legal for advice and support

Fatima is a young mother of two. She was married to an abusive man, who amongst other things, tried to abduct their children.

Her previous lawyer advised her to make an application that was not beneficial for her in the long term and he charged her for this 'service'.

We advised her about what the best course of action was. Furthermore, as Fatima was in financial difficulty, we successfully argued that the Home Office should not charge her the exorbitant application fee and apply their fee exemption policy for 'destitute' applicants.

Now Fatima has permission to remain in the UK with the possibility of applying for an extension and ultimately indefinite leave to remain in the future. She is able to work and enrol in formal study.

Contact us if you need immigration advice.

IHRC
Legal



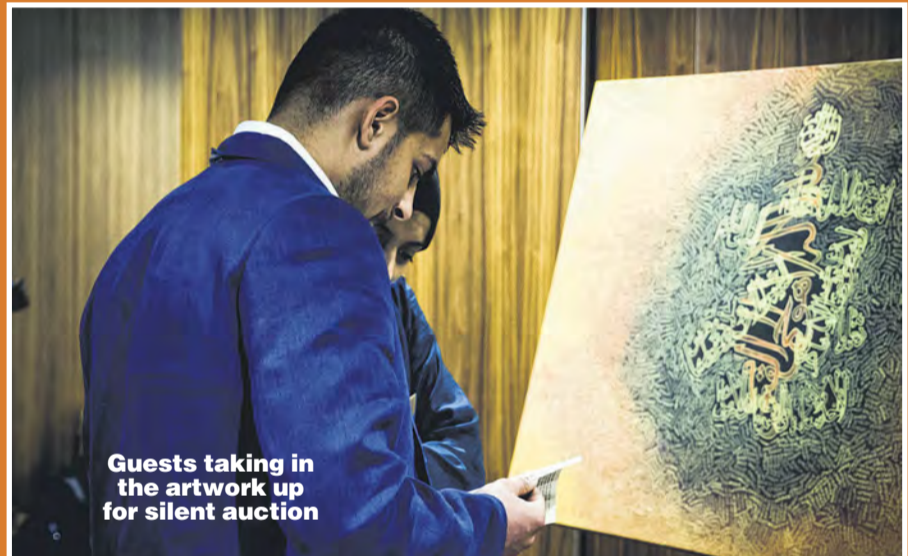
202 Preston Road,
Wembley HA9 8PA,
United Kingdom

T: 020 8904 4222
E: legal@ihrc.org
W: www.ihrc.org.uk



YASSER ABDELMOUTTALIB

Massoud Shadjareh outlining IHRC's advocacy work



Guests taking in the artwork up for silent auction



ISLAMOPHOBIA AWARDS 2015

'Islamophobia remains a serious problem around the world and has been hugely exacerbated by the western protagonists of the so-called War on Terror'



Hosts Lena Mohamed and Nazim Ali

The Islamophobia awards - our annual fundraising event to acknowledge the worst Islamophobes of the past year through satire - returned on 7 March 2015. Centred on the growing prejudice and racism occurring in the media and throughout society, the evening featured a spoof 'awards ceremony', a three-course meal and a performance from the award-winning comedian Aamer Rahman.

The Islamophobia Awards are the highlight of IHRC's social calendar and our main annual fundraising event. It gives an opportunity to our supporters to meet the unsung heroes and heroines who make the organisation tick and also to learn more about what goes on behind the scenes in Britain's busiest Islamic human rights organisation. At the same time they allow us to enjoy ourselves by taking a light-hearted swipe at public figures and organisations whose actions have generated or perpetuated hatred and/or violence against Muslims or their religion. Although they may give the impression of trivialising

Spoof Award Winners

For Muslim minorities in the West this has translated into a climate of fear as politicians and media peddle a culture of hate that in some respects is analogous to the demonisation of the Jews in Nazi Germany. The consequences of this "otherisation" of Muslims continue to be deadly. In June a Muslim student dressed in the burkha was

murdered as she walked to university in Colchester in the UK. In Germany a Muslim refugee from Eritrea, Khalid Idris, was murdered on the same night that 25,000 people attended a demonstration of the anti-Islam and Muslims everywhere.)



The overall award of the evening - for the worst Islamophobe of the year - was given to Theresa May

well-known talk show host Bill Maher (who was a very close runner-up!) and the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Charlie Hebdo is perceived by many to be Islamophobic and racist when it comes to many issues. The overall award of the evening - for the worst Islamophobe of the year - was given to the esteemed Theresa May for her array of counter-terrorism policies which have demonised and isolated Muslims. Hamja Ahsan was in attendance and he spoke briefly once the award was announced as he has first hand experi-



Comedian Aamer Rahman

Genuine winners

While the spoof 'awards ceremony' was the centrepiece of the evening, time was also taken to honour those who have battled against Islamophobia. These winners included Imam Achmad Cassiem in South Africa, Dr Abdel-Rahmene Azzouzi in France, the author Arun Kundnani for his recent work 'The Muslims are Coming!' and the community of Cold Lake in Canada for their response to the vandalism of a local mosque. While we were not able to reach any of those personally involved with 'love bombing' the mosque in Canada, we were able to show the audience recorded messages of thanks from the rest of the winners. Imam Cassiem spoke of everyone needing to find their inner strength and their inner truth - in doing so we will all be more effective in the fight for justice. Dr Azzouzi - who wrote an incisive letter on the Islamophobic climate in France - also delivered an indictment on the state of his own country while simultaneously expressing his gratitude for the award. Arun Kundnani recognised the work of the activists he has collaborated with over the years, mentioning that a few were probably sitting in the audience as well. The Islamophobia Awards serves many purposes but it is also IHRC's annual fundraiser and we were very pleased by the kind generosity of those in attendance who so willingly donated to further our cause. Professional fundraiser Na'eem Raza spoke at

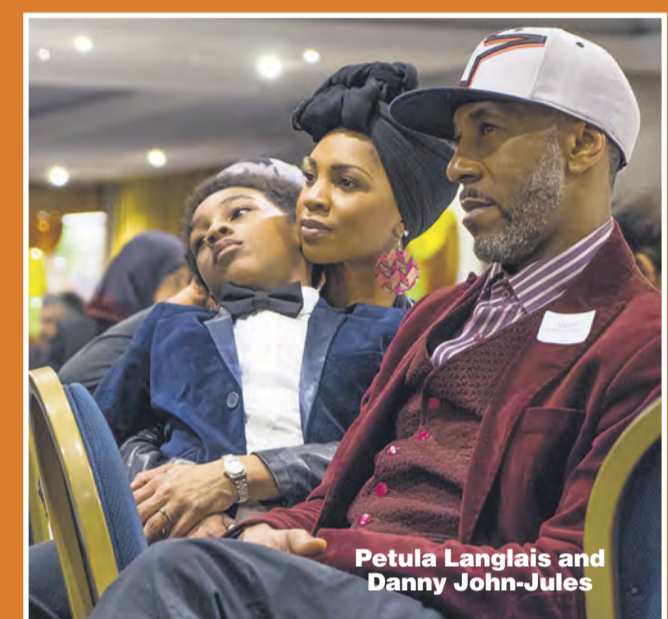
length about IHRC's causes - the Hate Crime Project which has produced statistics on anti-Muslim discrimination in the UK, USA, Canada and France. He encouraged the audience to contribute to the next project which could cover the likes of Germany and Portugal.

One of the highlights of the evening was a performance by the acclaimed comedian Aamer Rahman. Having already appeared at the Sydney Comedy Festival, Adelaide Fringe and the famous Edinburgh Fringe Festival Aamer is a growing talent and his acerbic wit meant he was the perfect compliment to the evening of revue. With lines both hilarious and critical of many systems of power, Aamer's performance fit seamlessly into an evening that was meant to entertain and educate.

The audience was also treated to a recitation from spoken word performer Hodan Yusuf. The writer and poet moved the audience with her compelling piece which bought home the fact that while this was an evening of comedy, these issues must be taken seriously as their effects are devastating. This point was underlined by co-host Lena Mohamed who drew attention to the horrendous Chapel Hill murders in the US, and comments by journalists like Cathy Newman who freely write about how unfortunate it is that there isn't more sectarian violence between Muslims.

Lena also spoke specifically about the Chairman of the Charity Commission: William Shawcross. Ninety-five percent of Muslim organisations are charities and evidence is mounting that they are disproportionately being targeted by the Commission. New measures give greater powers to the Commission to target charities by closing bank accounts, seizing computers, being able to monitor them for extended periods of time, and also shutting them down.

By Nadia Rasheed and Faisal Bodi



Petula Langlais and Danny John-Jules



Arzu Merali being interviewed by Russia Today



Spoken word poet Hodan Yusuf



Volunteering: GIVE US FIVE MINUTES

IHRC has been blessed with the support of many volunteers, based in the UK and abroad.

From those who write letters of support to prisoners and detainees, to those who research reports and help out at events and distribute material and raise awareness in their local areas, IHRC's work has been carried on by the blessings of Allah (swt) through the dedication of so many people. This year please take at least a few minutes of your time to join these volunteers. If you join our mailing list you will receive alerts from our campaigns section. It takes a few minutes of your time whenever you like. You can subscribe online at this link: <http://eepurl.com/OnJE9>

IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN FIVE MINUTES

There are many other ways you can help. You could be helping in admin (if you are based near the IHRC offices), research, demonstrations, campaigning, distributing IHRC materials, manning stalls and helping out at events. Volunteering is helpful to us but also helps you to develop your own personal skills and broadens your mind. It is an excellent way to become familiar with what practical action you can take to pursue justice and preserve human rights.

If you want to volunteer



Volunteers setting up a IHRC exhibition

in this way please email nadia@ihrc.org for more information. If you are unable to donate your time we would greatly appreciate your financial support. This could be in the form of a regular donation by standing order, a one off donation or purchasing or selling various products that we produce such as Eid cards and t-shirts.

This is a testimony from one of our volunteers: "Volunteering for the IHRC

has always proved rewarding on a number of levels. The range of activities undertaken by the IHRC and the vast array of topics the commission covers serve not only to provide an incentive to act against the many injustices we witness today, but provide an intellectual foundation for that struggle. The sense of unity and brotherhood amongst the volunteers serves to also induce a spiritual reward for Volunteering at the IHRC."



Helping out on Genocide Memorial Day

Volunteering:

My experiences as an intern

Ibegan my internship for IHRC during my final year at university. I was nervous but excited to start to see what I would learn by working in a human rights organisation.

I worked as a research assistant under Arzu Merali who is head of research and one of the founders of the IHRC. With her support and advice I undertook a number of interesting roles which complimented by degree subject (international politics). The various tasks I undertook consisted of being provided with a topic that was

overlooked by mainstream news programmes and through selected material, I researched and wrote a report which was then published on IHRC'S website. I helped out during IHRC events, most notably the Islamophobia Awards and most interestingly I was given the opportunity to organise the production of a documentary regarding Bahraini mercenaries.

Through my time as an intern I was lucky enough to meet an array of journalists, activists, photographers and academics in a number of fields and learn and

experience new things. For example, before interning, I never showed much interest in art until I began attending IHRC'S art exhibitions. The internship allowed me to develop new interests while expanding the knowledge that I had gained at university and allowed me to actively apply this knowledge to real life situations.

IHRC'S staff create such a friendly atmosphere you can't help but feel at ease working there. They made my time as an intern even more enjoyable.

Thania Uddin

Amina was told she could not pray at school during her lunch break.

So her parents asked IHRC for support

Amina was told by her teachers she was not allowed to pray at school. The school insisted that as a secular school, they could not allow anyone to practise their faith. This meant that 9 year old Amina had to choose between going to school and practising her religion.

IHRC supported Amina and her family to challenge the school's decision. The school agreed to provide prayer facilities for Amina to pray. She can now get an education and practise her faith.

Contact us if you think you have been a victim of discrimination because of your faith.

Islamic Human Rights Commission

202 Preston Road,
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Key Facts

- Israel is the world's 3rd largest (\$) exporter of dates worth \$151 million in 2014.
- The UK is Israel's 3rd largest market for dates worth \$23 million in 2014 (10,000 tons).
- 60% of the world's Medjool dates are produced in Israel (2013).
- 60% of Israeli dates are grown on illegal settlement plantations in the Jordan Valley (2014).

If you buy a Medjool date, there's a strong possibility that it is from an illegal settlement - grown on stolen land

Settlements

Israeli settlements built on stolen Palestinian land have been ruled illegal by the International Court of Justice. Nearly half of the settlements in the Jordan Valley grow dates; it's their most profitable crop and contributes significantly to their economic viability. 80% of settlement dates are exported, making up some 40% of all dates exported from Israel. If you oppose the settlements, target their dates.

Exploitation

Picking of the dates is hard work, Israeli settlers bring in low paid Palestinian labourers to do this back breaking work. During the pruning season, workers are dropped on the date palm trees by a hoisting crane at five in the morning, left perched on palms that soar to 12 metres – the height of a four-storey building, and left there swaying in the wind for up to eight hours without even a toilet break. With no means to come down until the crane returns at the end of the day, the workers cling to the tree with one arm and work with the other to meet their

BOYCOTT ISRAELI DATES

quota. If they fall behind they will lose their jobs.

Child Labour

The Israelis prefer to employ children – even issuing them official work permits, as they can climb trees faster, work for less and it's easier to cheat and humiliate them. Out of desperate poverty Palestinian families are forced to take their children out of school and hand them over to the settlers to work for a pittance.

Guilty Companies

Every year Israel expands its share of the global dates market - up 16% in 2011 and 23% in 2012. It has now surpassed Saudi Arabia to become the world's 3rd largest exporter of dates (\$ terms) after Tunisia and Iran with an export value of \$151 million in 2014. After the Netherlands and France, the UK is Israel's largest market for dates, worth \$23 million in 2014 with nearly 10,000 tons of Israeli dates being exported to the UK.

Hadiklaim, the Israeli Date Growers Cooperative, which includes illegal settler plantations in the Jordan Valley, sells 65% of all Israeli dates. Its brand names

include Jordan River, King Solomon, Tamara Barhi Dates, Desert Diamond, Rapunzel, Bomaja, Shams and Delilah. They also supply Israeli dates to supermarkets which market them under their own brands. These include Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons and Waitrose. Sometimes they are labelled "produced in the West Bank". Remember, these are not Palestinian dates. Hadiklaim have also sold South African dates with profits going to Israel, but due to the boycott their South African partner Karsten Farms has cut ties and vowed never to partner with any Israeli entity complicit in the occupation.

Mehadrin, Israel's largest fresh produce exporter, even boasted once of doubling its Medjool date sales citing strong demand in Ramadan! Its dates have brand names Premium Medjoul, Fancy Medjoul, Royal Treasure, Red Sea, and Bonbonierra. Sometimes their packaging states "Grown by Palestinian Farmers"; this refers to Palestinian 'slave' labourers found on Israeli plantations.

Tnuvot Field (Field Produce Marketing Ltd) is Israel's 3rd largest exporter of Medjool dates. Its brand names include Paradise

dates, and Star dates.

Reading Label Not Enough

Unfortunately reading the label is no longer enough as Hadiklaim admit that from 2012 they have been shipping dates from the Jordan Valley labelled 'Produce of Palestine' to Europe and Dubai. It's unclear how much of this is from Palestinian farms and how much is from illegal Israeli settlements.

An Al-Jazeera report from August 2012 featured an Israeli agricultural export manager in Mahola settlement, one of the illegal Israeli colonies on the West Bank where Hadiklaim sources its Medjool dates. He explained that a pallet of dates boxes in his packing warehouse was labelled "Palestine - Jericho" because "sometimes the British object [to buying from us].. We just avoid writing 'Israel' on the boxes.. we often print special boxes at the request of the client.. sometimes they ask us to change the name of the country of origin on the boxes."

There are also reports of Palestinian Ministry of Economy intercepting 20 tons of Israeli settlement dates on their way to Palestinian packing houses for

repackaging for export under the "Made in Palestine" label. In September 2014 reporters from the Anadolu news agency interviewed several Palestinian merchants in Ariha involved in this nefarious activity.

So now even the 'Made in Palestine' label is no longer a guarantee that you are not buying Israeli occupation dates! We would caution against buying any Medjool dates from the region unless they are from trusted Palestinian sources like Zaytoun or Yaffa.

BDS Call

In 2005 Palestinian civil society groups initiated a call for people of conscience around the world to Boycott, Divest and Sanction Israel until it complies with international law and Palestinian rights. The call was endorsed by over 170 Palestinian organisations representing all sections of society including farmers.

Plea From Palestine

Activists visiting the Palestinian village of Fasayl in the Jordan Valley discovered that villagers are slowly being forced off their land by the Israeli army for settlement expansion. The only livelihood left open to them is to work for those same Israeli settlements. These Palestinians whose land had been stolen and who had been forced to work for the settlements (including two children under the age of 12), in order to feed their families had a message for the activists, a plea for anyone who would listen: "Take action against the companies that support Israeli apartheid!"

• For more information please see the Boycott Israeli Dates Campaign page: www.inminds.com/boycott-israeli-dates.php

BOYCOTT ISRAELI DATES

WWW.INMINDS.COM/BOYCOTT-ISRAELI-DATES.PHP



On 19th Jan 2013 Palestinian mother Reema and her baby girl Qumar were attacked by Israeli soldiers as she farmed her land in Um El-Arayes.

They locked her up in their prison, infamous for torture and abuse of women, whilst the military declared her farm a 'closed military zone'.

Its a standard practice Israel uses to steal Palestinian land before handing it over to Israeli settlers who then harvest & export the stolen produce - dates and other fruits & veg. to the UK and elsewhere.

They stole from her, don't be part of the crime - Boycott Israel

Check the label, avoid dates labelled Israel, West Bank, Jordan Valley, Red Sea or 'produce of more than one country'. Israeli Dates are sold under these brands:

Hadiklaim Mehadrin MTEX Jordan River King Solomon Tamara Barhi Desert Diamond Rapunzel Bomaja Shams Delilah Jordan Plains Premium Medjoul Fancy Medjoul Royal Treasure Red Sea Bonbonierra Carmel Agrexco



Supermarkets labelling Israeli dates under their own brand names:

Online: Social media at IHRC

Currently thriving on a number of social media platforms, IHRC has the capability to reach the far corners of the world. With a presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Vimeo – we’re providing you content in unconventional and non-traditional ways. Yes, we’re happy for you to browse our website and glad for every briefing and article that is read. But we also acknowledge that everyone needs to consume their media in different kinds of ways. That’s why you’re able to find the latest updates on a daily basis in the way that best suits you. Follow us on Twitter @IHRC where we immediately post news in the form of press releases, articles and comment pieces. @IHRCBookshop is especially devoted to providing interested readers with recommendations, alerting them of special offers and exciting new titles. It’s a great way to engage and interact with our audience. Twitter also provides a great space for those who aren’t able to attend our events in person. Whether it’s an author evening

hosted by the IHRC Bookshop & Gallery or a major conference taking place in London, @IHRC will have the lowdown along with the most pertinent points so you don’t miss out on anything vital. But better yet, with the availability of IHRC.TV it’s possible for you to be lounging on a beach in Australia while watching Salman Sayyid speak at a seminar. Thanks to IHRC.TV we’re able to livestream all our events around the globe. With our presence on Facebook, you’re able to ensure that your questions are the ones that are asked. Most IHRC events feature Q&A discussions – and while they’re lively enough with an in-house audience, questions from around the world result in more varied debate and dialogue. Facebook is also a great way to stay updated if you feel Twitter is too pithy and prefer something meatier. Leave a long comment (short ones are welcome too) in response to a briefing we post or ask questions for us to pose to speakers and academics. For those of us not too fond of the written word,

there’s Instagram. Follow IHRCGallery on Instagram where you’ll see the inner workings of the IHRC Office & Bookshop (the stuff that isn’t top-secret, mostly), be treated to the latest displays from our exhibiting artists and view behind-the-scenes shots from an array of events. Less formal than both Twitter and Facebook, don’t be ashamed to indulge in IHRC’s brand of aesthetic therapy. We’re also hoping to launch a site devoted solely to IHRC Gallery in the future so keep your eyes peeled. Likely, the earliest images will be posted to the IHRCGallery Instagram first! All our video content is uploaded to both Youtube and Vimeo and sorted into playlists for your viewing pleasure. Look back on major annual events like Genocide Memorial Day or the Islamophobia Awards. Perhaps you’re more interested in the many talks that have been delivered by Ramon Grosfoguel over the year. Whatever your preference it’s all there for you to watch at your leisure. Speaking at one of our recent author evenings Muhammad Mojlum Khan said: “Without knowledge there is ignorance and in Islam there is no room for ignorance.” So we’re making sure you have no room for excuses – don’t give in to ignorance when IHRC has a plethora of platforms here to guide and inform you!

Nadia Rasheed

Decolonialism: Decoloniality Europe

Throughout the year IHRC continued and expanded its involvement in Decoloniality Europe, a network concerned with encouraging communication, discussion, collaboration and common action between activists and intellectuals whose work revolves around decolonising Europe. Decoloniality Europe (DE) was set up in 2010 to challenge the eurocentric world view and system that has been in place since the European colonial conquests of the 16th century. This colonial Europe was built upon the negation of the ‘other’ inside and outside Europe and the violence, epistemicide and genocide against him and her. Among the activities undertaken by IHRC this year in conjunction with DE was the annual Genocide Memorial Day. Under the aegis of DE, the event has now expanded outside London to take in European cities as well as for the first time this year the occupied city of Jerusalem. The major Islamophobia Conference in London which took place on 13 December 2014 was also organised under the umbrella of DE.

Sinterklaas Festival

One of Decoloniality Europe’s main campaigns this year was to resist and reeducate people about the popular Sinterklaas festival in the Netherlands. According to the legend every December 5th, St. Nicholas travels to the Netherlands from Spain to reward or punish children. Accompanying him are an army of helpers or “Black Petes”, clownish and acrobatic figures dressed in Moorish page suits. While the legend of Sinterklaas is rooted in Middle Age European history the character of Black Pete is a colonial construct dating from the 19th century at the height of the Dutch Empire. At the time the figure of Black Pete was produced the Netherlands was a global colonial power involved in slavery and slave trade for more than 200 years. From the late sixteenth century to the abolishment of slavery in 1863, the Dutch had traded over half a million African men, women and children across the Atlantic and enslaved millions more. Black Pete symbolised the colonial subjugation of black Africans which was underpinned by

a dominant biological discourse of racism that translated into stereotypical images and representations of black people as stupid, ugly, childlike, ruled by base desires and impulses who were closer to apes than humans. Those stereotypes became engrained in Dutch popular culture. Since the 1960s campaigners in the Netherlands and elsewhere have applied pressure on the Dutch authorities to reconsider and reconfigure the festival to remove racist references. In July 2015 campaigners won a small victory when a court ordered the mayor of Amsterdam to reconsider the annual parade through the city. IHRC continues to provide resource materials and updates about the anti-Sinterklaas campaign as well as supporting fellow campaigners. We believe that some elements of the Sinterklaas festival are an insult to the Netherlands’ black inhabitants and an affront to the memory of those who suffered from European colonialism and the country would be better served to reform the annual parade in line with the expectations of a modern multicultural society.

...more on page 14

Support Justice, Help IHRC

Islamic Human Rights Commission



IHRC has grown and developed through the generous donations of its supporters without whom, we could not have survived. Please remember us this year with your du’a and

your financial assistance. Please help us in whatever way you can – a small monthly contribution is as valuable as a generous one-off donation.

If you wish to donate solely to IHRC’s charitable work, please complete the IHRC Trust form (green form). Otherwise please fill in this form (red form).

There are many worthy causes, and we request that you remember IHRC’s work when donating, in the best way that you can.

May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts in this world and the next. Ameen.



- E info@ihrc.org
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Supporters of IHRC get free copies of IHRC reports (those paying concessionary rates get a selection) and reduced rates on other items. Concessionary supporters are encouraged to donate £5 a month. Without this type of regular support – however small, IHRC would not be able to operate.

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Please pay (tick choice):
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United Nations: Getting the Muslim message across

Since the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban (Aug-Sept 2001) and the historic declaration condemning Zionism as racism and Israel for genocide, IHRC has greatly increased its activities with the UN.

IHRC obtained consultative status with the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2007. Consultative status allows NGOs to attend as observers and lobby during conferences like the Human Rights Council session, special sessions of the Human Rights Council and regular

IHRC will continue to campaign for better human rights in the corridors of the UN

Myanmar, Denmark, Belgium, Netherlands, Austria, Australia, Thailand, Sudan, UK, Nigeria, Egypt and Pakistan had been made. The submissions are uploaded on the IHRC website and can be found on <http://ihrc.org.uk/activities/ihrc-at-un?layout=default>.

As well as submitting oral, written statements and reports, NGOs with consultative status can hold side events or parallel events during the Human Rights Council Session. The Human Rights Council Session is held in September, March and June of each year. It gives an opportunity for NGOs to highlight issues to other NGOs, staff working at the UN and to the member states. It provides a platform for NGOs to lobby and highlight their concerns and communicate the facts of what is happening on the ground in different countries. The Human Rights Council session also provides a platform for NGOs to work together on a particular issue, for NGOs with Consultative Status to bring NGOs without Consultative Status, experts and individual civil society members or victims of human rights violations to the UN and give them a platform to get their voice heard.

Many NGOs with consultative status like IHRC convene side events or parallel events on a particular issue or on human rights violations taking place in a particular country. It is an excellent platform for the

otherwise voiceless in civil society to get their message across to the UN and the international community.

IHRC has organised many side events. The majority of them since 2013 have been held in September and in March. The most recent have covered Egypt, Malaysia, war crimes trials in Bangladesh, targeted

extra-judicial killings in Pakistan, Islamophobia, Nigeria and post Charlie-Hebdo Attack discrimination in France.

These side events provide an opportunity to highlight issues to the media, civil society, member states and UN staff members.

IHRC will be continuing to campaign for better

human rights in the corridors of the UN, not just for Muslim causes but all communities who are victims of human rights violations from nations who are acting with impunity or individuals and state authorities who act without regard for international human rights law.

Jawad Husain



A young demonstrator makes her views known outside the UN headquarters in Geneva

VISIT THE IHRC BOOKSHOP & GALLERY IN-STORE AND ON-LINE

IHRC is delighted to announce its new on-line store is now up and running

SHOP.IHRC.ORG



The IHRC Bookshop hosts an array of titles; from political exposes to fictional works for children. We pride ourselves on carrying books that are not easy to find and source. Our own publications can be found online and in-store.

Do you want to be more informed on Islam – pick a biography or a translation of the Qu'ran – or perhaps you'd like to engage with some critical thinking and are interested in dissecting issues of race, civil rights and economics? We will have you covered!

Make the IHRC Bookshop your destination for toms on current politics, decolonial theory and contemporary struggles – and know that we have a little bit of everything else too!

All profits from the sales go to IHRCT and help fund the work that we do.

If you live in or near London, UK you can always pop in to our store. We are open from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday and 10am – 6pm on Saturdays.

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sessions of the various committees that deal with issues like discrimination, torture, social and political rights and counter-terrorism. There is also the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which examines the human rights situation of the UN Member States.

Again at the UPR session, NGOs with consultative and without consultative status have the opportunity to submit alternative reports to the various OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) committees and during the UPR.

NGOs with consultative status also have the opportunity to make written and oral statements during the sessions and special sessions of the Human Rights Council. IHRC has submitted oral, written statements, submitted reports including UPR reports to the UN OHCHR regarding various countries. Recent submissions have been on France, Canada, Bahrain, United States of America, Saudia Arabia, Portugal and Malaysia. On 1st September 2014, the UN Human Rights Council organised a special session on Iraq and ISIS (Daesh). IHRC made a statement on the situation in Iraq at that session. Prior to my joining in 2013, submissions on



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WILL IT BE WITH HAMAD?



...continued from 12

Decoloniality Europe

In the days and weeks following the attacks on the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, DE was heavily engaged in combating media and politicians who sought to instrumentalise the incident in order to demonise Muslims and their faith. In a press release DE strongly condemned the irresponsible declarations made by Jeanette Boughrab, former French right wing UMP minister accusing the Party of the Indigenous of the Republic (PIR) of being responsible for the killing of the journalists of Charlie Hebdo because of their criticism of the Islamophobic positions taken by this journal. DE also issued a statement condemning official and media reactions to the attacks as being inspired by a new wave of colonial racism. The statement said that colonial racism and its chauvinistic national-

ism is threatening to unleash another genocide in Europe. The western colonial projects that were a precursor to the Holocaust – German genocide against the Herero in Namibia in the early 20th century and the United States’ genocide against indigenous people in North America in the 19th century - are still very much alive and active today. Satirical images made in the 1920s and 1930s to dehumanize Jews, Roma people, or non / Western colonial subjects, are today normalized when directed towards Muslims and Black people. The refrain “never again” has been distorted and hijacked to mean “never again” just for Jews. On 24 January a public meeting entitled ‘What Now For Europe? The instrumentalisation of the Paris attacks’ was also held featuring a diverse platform of speakers. The meeting was initiated to discuss the immediate aftermath and examine what rhetoric will follow and what directions Europe will take in the medium and the long term.



What Now For Europe? The instrumentalisation of the Paris attacks

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The Universal Justice Network delegation in Penang, Indonesia

Universal Justice Network: Fighting Sectarianism

Set up in 2008, the Universal Justice Network (UJN) is an umbrella organisation for 50 different Muslim-led non-governmental organisations around the world and is committed to addressing the increasingly pressing global issue of sectarianism that is facing Muslims. It has two secretariats; one in London, UK, headed by IHRC, and the second one in Penang, Malaysia, headed by Citizens International (CI).

Addressing sectarianism is at the core of the UJN agenda, and the focal point of the projects implemented by UJN in the last two years

loggerheads with one another to engage in conflict resolution. Next, UJN identified Indonesia as a key area where the issue of sectarianism needed attention. In Indonesia sectarianism is actually coming from the grassroots and does not appear to be institutionalised. Local scholars are banning Islamic books and gatherings, whilst all the time Christian missionary work is gaining ground (thousands have converted to Christianity and churches are springing up everywhere).

This next meeting was convened in Penang, Malaysia in December 2014.

would present ideas relating to unity within Islam, the agenda of Western and Saudi colonial enterprises, and ways of moving forward. The participants would then have the opportunity to respond and suggest ways in which these were or were not significant within the context of Indonesia.

There was a session on the Amman Message which had been signed by leading Islamic figures, including Indonesians, and provided a basis for ensuring an acceptance of difference under the umbrella of Islam. It challenged sectarianism, and promoted unity and a sense

Saudi Arabia", aiming to address recurring issues of disenfranchisement and often violent repression of human rights defenders and legitimate political actors. Whilst the situations in these countries may differ by degrees and in some political and social aspects, the campaign aims to spotlight the grave human rights violations raised by the majority of people within these countries who currently face unprecedented attacks for their commitment to betterment and democratic change. Many of them are subjected to cruel and inhumane punishment by their local governments, torture, unjustified imprisonment, breach of the right to a fair trial and rule of law. In all these countries the current regimes suppress the diversity, will and transformative potential of the majority of those living within their borders.



Bringing organisations and experts together to tackle some of the key issues of sectarian conflicts.

The main activities of the campaign are based on debating, drafting policy-related briefings, research and educational initiatives,

all promoting peaceful transitional processes and empowerment of the masses within the relevant political systems affected by the increasingly catch-all discourse of securitisation. Since the campaign began many well-researched reports have been issued on the following themes: the use of mercenaries in Bahrain, stripping of nationality as a weapon of political suppression and the show-trials in Egypt that have meted out long sentences to political opponents.

Lastly, an informative digest is published on a weekly basis on Saudi Arabia with the aim of disseminating unofficial materials on the persecution of political dissidents and not least the issues arising from the recent outbreak of war in Yemen.

Caterina Aiena



under the co-chairmanship of IHRC and CI, Muslim World Priority Project in Pakistan and Project for a Just and Peaceful Society in Indonesia. With the assistance of local and international experts these seek to bring organisations with large Muslim followings into communication in order to tackle some of the key and underlying issues of sectarian conflicts.

The first project was in 2013 when UJN successfully managed to bring together various high profile religious and political leaders from Pakistan associated with groups and tendencies at

Guests were invited from Indonesia, all of whom were active in the country's religious and political life, including community leaders, local politicians, activists, and academics within their respective communities across the country. In addition to these figures, facilitators were invited from IHRC, Citizens International, Mazlumder (Turkey) and the Islamic Movement (Nigeria), as well as independent figures from Malaysia, the USA and Iran.

The three-day meeting was formatted in order to facilitate a series of workshops, where facilitators

of community between Muslims across the world. After much discussion and debate it was agreed that a committee would be formed to reproduce the Amman Message with a greater input from Indonesian Ulema to ensure that the context of the country was recognised. All Muslim organisations in the country would then be encouraged to endorse it and disseminate it to their constituents.

In addition to the conflict resolution projects, in May 2014 UJN launched the campaign "Democratisation and Empowerment in Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt and

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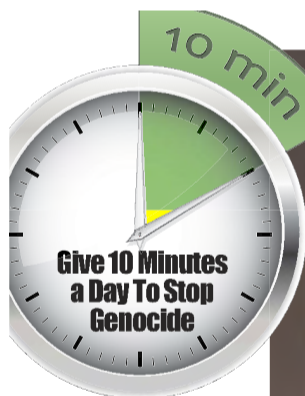


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The Burmese Apartheid

The following comparison of Buddhist Neighbors and Rohingya Muslims tell the story of how Burmese government policies violate Rohingya's basic rights.

BUDDHIST NEIGHBORS	ROHINGYA MUSLIMS
Are citizens	Citizenship has been taken away
Have 1 physician available per 700 Buddhists	Have 1 physician per 83,000 Muslims (there are currently no physicians since the Nobel Peace Prize-winning humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders was expelled by the government)
Can live in their homes	About 250,000 are taken to concentration camps. About 2 million are forced to live in refugee camps of the neighboring countries.
Can marry without a license	Cannot marry unless they get government permission, which is rarely issued, and if it is, often requires heavy bribery. Marrying without permission results in 10 years in prison
Can have as many children as they wish	Are allowed only 2 children per family
Can seek school admission	Cannot enter a school
Can be employed	Cannot have a job
Can worship freely	Cannot worship freely. Mosques are closed during Ramadan. Friday prayers are not allowed
Can travel freely	Cannot travel freely

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