

# Islamic Human Rights Commission



**Muslim Awakening**  
**PAGE 6**



**Azerbaijan: Hijab ban**  
**PAGE 9**



**Hold on to the rope of Allah**  
**PAGE 12**

VOLUME 12 - RAMADAN 1432 / AUGUST 2011

*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**

# TURNING TO ALLAH FOR LIBERATION



**Egyptians attend Friday prayers at a rally at Cairo's Tahrir Square during a protest calling for national unity and expressed solidarity with the Palestinians as they mark the Nakba.**

**R**udyard Kipling famously remarked in his poem The Ballad of East and West: "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet".

He was wrong. They did meet and in a violent and destructive way. The West imposed itself on the world Kipling refers to as the East in the form of the slave trade and colonialism. To this day the fallout from this inhuman interaction continues and imperialism continues under the guise of globalisation. After the First World War, the Ottoman Empire was dismembered and divided up between the British and the French. Although these lands

later emancipated themselves from the direct clutches of their colonial rulers, their influence remained. Imam Zaid Shakir puts it well in his recent article 'Reflections on The Islamic Legitimacy of the Muslim Uprisings', describing the very instruments used by the West to put the Muslim world into a neo-colonial order:

"...as Muslims we should not see ourselves as being eternally trapped in a world where we are the helpless objects of the actions of others who have constructed institutions that are antithetical to our values and interests. The nation-state system in the Muslim world is less than one hundred years old. As an institution it has debatable legitimacy and authenticity according to

Muslim political thought. The way its sociopolitical role in Muslim societies has evolved has been shaped by un-Islamic realities such as colonization and the Cold War, and by un-Islamic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and now the World Trade Organization. To declare this arrangement beyond question, criticism or challenge is not only unjust, it is a betrayal of Muslim history".

The West has been trying to control Muslim leadership for decades. It supported and sponsored brutal regimes and adopted them as allies. Before the ousting of Mubarak, Tony Blair called him "immensely courageous and a force for good."

With the flowering of the

Arab Spring one nation after another is rising up catching the West off guard. Who knew that a 26 year-old Tunisians Mohammed Bouazizi's suicide would shake up the brutal regimes in the region. We have seen the fall of Ben Ali, Mubarak and possibly others. The people of those nations have had suffered long enough and are now standing up against their brutal monarchs and dictators. This is a promising sign for civilians in those nations; freedom and liberty are in the horizon. Various grassroots civil society organisations and religious scholars have been working for this moment for decades. Hundreds more people have been added to the

**Continued on page 11**



# IHRC Bookshop, Gallery and Information Centre



Gareth Pearce talking about the case of Talha Ahsan



Author Lawrence Archer discussing his book Ricin the inside story of the terror plot that never was

2010 marked another milestone in IHRC's development with the opening of our long-awaited bookshop, gallery and information centre.

Over 100 guests turned up on a snowy December evening for the venue's inauguration. They included the Rev Frank Gelli, Shaykh Mohammed Saeed Bahmanpour and the Muslim Council of Britain. Others who couldn't attend such as Jeremy Corbyn, Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss of Neturei Karta, USA and Dr Nazreen Nawaz of Hizb ut-Tahrir, sent their support via video messages.

The venue is home to a variety of artworks ranging from the photographic prints of Per Engström's trip to Xinjiang in China to wood craft from Pakistan and Iran and Batik Quranic verses from Indonesia.

The books cover a range of titles for the discerning reader concerned with human rights issues and Islamic thought. There are classics from Frantz Fanon, Sayyid Qutb, Dr Ali Shariati and Edward Said as well as new and lesser known works from around the world.

We are proud to stock the Radical Pamphlets series published by Citizens International covering issues of structural violence.

There is even a sizeable children's section offering fiction and non-fiction at the premises based at 202 Preston Road, Wembley, in northwest London. With a coffee machine and comfortable surroundings, everyone is welcome to visit and read, or make an appointment to learn more about Islam and human rights.

The gallery hosts monthly events including poetry readings, author book signings and lectures. Since the start of 2011, IHRC has already been host to journalist David Cronin, author and human rights campaigner Lawrence Archer, ex-Guantanamo detainee Moazzam Beg and anti-racism writer Arun Kundnani.

This July saw a moving event to mark the fifth year in detention without trial in the UK of activist and poet Talha Ahsan. Amongst the readers of Ahsan's poetry were renowned human rights lawyer Gareth Peirce and veteran peace campaigner Bruce Kent. This was also the first IHRC event to be streamed live from the premises. To watch future live events or watch recordings of other IHRC programmes tune in on-line at <http://www.ihrc.tv>.

The shop's catalogue is being added to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust on-line shop, so all our supporters can take advantage of this facility. All



Customer browsing through books

profits from sales go to the IHRC Trust. Without your support to date IHRC would not have been able to come this far in helping those whose rights have been denied, and in fighting to achieve peace and justice. By continuing to support us you are a part of that struggle.



Past monthly author evening adverts



Grand opening of the IHRC Bookshop, Gallery, and Information Centre



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The past year has been a very eventful and challenging one for Muslims around the world. The first half of 2011 saw the fall of oppressive dictators and the shaking of others. And as old orders are being confronted and challenged by the masses, the strategies being employed to maintain a semblance of that old order have also begun to change with the times. The tools of misinformation are being sharpened into more sophisticated weapons, whilst more tried and tested methods are undergoing cosmetic makeovers so that they can be presented in new guises. All this is taking place amid an atmosphere of increasing fear and hate, which is being actively fostered to distract people from the real challenges at hand.

The revolutions currently taking place all across the Middle East have been a very long time coming. This reaction from the masses is an inevitable and direct result of decades of brutal oppression, endemic corruption and systematic suppression of even the most basic expression of the peoples' will. For too long the entire region has been controlled by dictators of all stripes, from absolute monarchs and military generals, to those passing on their presidency as a family heirloom. However, the common factor among all these has been the underlying concern to safeguard the interests of the US and Israel and their allies against those of their own people.

At IHRC, we unequivocally condemn all the abuses and excesses which have led to the imprisonment, torture and brutalisation of innocents in their struggle for empowerment, and even more so in cases where such suppression has led to the loss of life. We remind all those with the audacity to attempt such tactics against their own people and their aspirations that they are struggling against the sands of time and, unless they revise their position, they will be left by the wayside along with those against whom such tactics have already backfired.

At the same time, however, we must be nuanced in our analysis of Western reactions to these mass protest movements. As we saw in the cases of Tunisia and Egypt, two long-standing client regimes under Western hegemony, not a word of support was spoken in favour of the people's uprisings until well into the eleventh hour, when the inevitable became undeniable, and even then, ambiguous euphemisms such as "controlled transition" were used. In the ongoing case of Yemen, the same still applies. In Bahrain, we have seen the silent approval of the invasion of Bahrain by Saudi Arabia in its effort to quash the protest movement. Saudi Arabia itself is a massive open air prison where prisoners number in the thousands and all voices for change, regardless of orientation, are brutally silenced and suppressed.

In Libya and Syria, the West has



Massoud Shadjareh Chair,  
Islamic Human Rights  
Commission

**"Figures for the EU published by Europol were even more damning in this regard, in that they found that out of a total of 2139 terrorist attacks committed in Europe in the period from 2006 to 2011, only 10 were attributed to 'Islamist terrorism,' a meagre 0.4%."**

been quick to support these uprisings and has actively fostered violent upheaval against the regimes, passing off their policies as the upholding of human rights. Their bloody interventions came because they have seen an opportunity to use and abuse these legitimate protest movements to bring US and Western power back in full force to these regions. The independence of these regimes does not excuse their bloody crimes against the people and we must find immediate and appropriate

ways to bring to account those who are guilty of crimes. However those amongst the opposition who have allowed the peoples' legitimate aspirations to be hijacked must also either urgently change track or be delegitimized by the people they have misled.

This tactic to extend hegemony is not new. We saw it in the 1980s and 1990s in Afghanistan; again in the invasion of Iraq, and we saw it in the manipulation of the Darfurian liberation struggle; all were converted into extensions of US and Israeli foreign policy. The question we must ask is whether those struggling for justice, including Muslims, have learned anything from these events or are bound to repeat the same mistakes?

On another front, we witness the evolving nature of the war against Islam. Amidst this we see the ongoing efforts that attempt to redefine Islam as something open to oppression and friendly to notions of Western colonialism. This is achieved through the multi-faceted means of newly manufactured anti-terror legislation, academia, media and political discourse. A vital element in this deadly equation is the attempt to emotionally manipulate people, both Muslim and non-Muslim alike, to cause Islam to become synonymous in everyone's minds with terror, violence and oppression. This gives rise to a sense of alarm and fear in the non-Muslim by distracting him from the real problems of unemployment and rising prices, and creates a sense of shame in the Muslim so that he is forever paralysed, or, if active at all, forever on the defensive.

As evidence of the grand scale of exaggeration of the threat of so-called "Islamist terrorism," I refer you to a 2005 FBI report documenting all terrorist attacks committed on US soil between 1980 and 2005, which found that whilst the vast majority of terrorist attacks during this period were committed by left wing, communist and nationalist groups, 7% of the attacks were committed by Jewish religious extremists in comparison to only 6% committed by Muslims. Figures for the EU published by Europol were even more damning in this regard, in that they found that out of a total of 2139 terrorist attacks committed in Europe in the period from 2006 to 2011, only 10 were attributed to "Islamist terrorism," a meagre 0.4%. The vast majority of such acts – over 80% – were committed by separatists in France and Spain. The powers that be are very well aware of these facts and figures which in most cases are results of studies they themselves have commissioned.

The public must be educated about these facts, the knowledge of which would have a profound impact on their sense of self-empowerment and capacity for liberation. We must educate ourselves with the understanding that Islam provides the solutions

Continued on page 5

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**Food  
Programme  
2011**

'Pass the Parcel' is the annual BCT food parcel programme. The drive this year will take place between June-August and the aim is to provide aid to the poor and needy in Afghanistan, Africa, India, Middle East, and Pakistan.

For a typical food parcel (oil, rice, wheat, flour, sugar etc), the average cost would be around £20 and would provide for a family of 4-5 people for a whole month.

To support this drive and for more details and information about the BCT projects and activities, kindly contact us or visit

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# RESEARCH FOR RIGHTS

It has been another productive year for the research section at IHRC, with the launch of another publishing arm and a varied set of publications added to its lists.

## ■ Research into Hate Crimes



IHRC's pilot project into Hate Crimes against Muslims in Western countries was completed in 2010 and published in 2011. *Getting the Message: The Recurrence of Hate Crimes in the UK* set out the findings of the survey undertaken in the UK. The pilot project took place in France and the UK, and the report into the situation in France is due for publication late 2011. The whole project aims to provide a format whereby sound statistics into the experiences of hate crime by minority communities can be compiled. The lack of such statistics, particularly in the case of Muslims, has led to the ignoring of the increase in hatred and hostility faced by Muslims in various minority contexts.

The presentation of such statistics at the national, international and regional levels will at least bring the situation to the attention of policymakers. Where there is a genuine will to address hatred and intolerance at those levels, this research will provide impetus to that policy.

The project will be refined and run annually looking at various countries. The project for 2011-12 will run in USA (California) and Azerbaijan.

## ■ Reflections on Chinese Policy in Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region: An Eyewitness Account of 5 July 2009 and the Aftermath



This essay, written by an eye-witness to the so-called riots in XUAR in China in 2009, provides a first hand perspective as to the causes

and impact of event on 5 July 2009. Reviewing China's policy towards minorities and particularly Uighur Muslims, the essay argues that China's rush towards development, its existing issues with non-Han ethnicities and its embracing of capitalism have exacerbated inequalities between ethnic groups and bred dissatisfaction amongst the working class facing joblessness and poverty for the first time.

## ■ BROKEN PROMISES: Human Rights, Constitutionalism and Socio-economic Exclusion in Bahrain



October 2010 saw the publication of Omar F. Ahmed's report into the underlying inequalities and problems in Bahrain. Ahmed's

research highlights that the structural disadvantages faced by Bahrain's Shia majority as well as the systematic usurpation of power by the Khalifa family that affects all of Bahrain's citizens. The report outlines the attempts at affecting the demographics of the country in order to create a pro-monarchy compliant citizenry; the marginalisation of communities; the persecution of social and political activists; and the continued abuse of domestic workers.

## ■ GERMANY, MUSLIMS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND CITIZENSHIP: Expectations and experiences of Muslim organisations



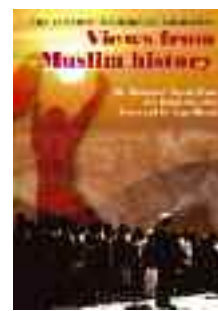
This report outlines the findings of IHRC research in 2007-08 into the views of Muslim civil society leaders. The aim was to assess, according to their view, the priorities and concerns of Muslims in Germany as opposed to the way government and political discourse present Muslim communities.

This book is an analysis of the results of that survey by Margit Liebhart. Combined with an overview of existing work in the field, Liebhart highlights minority issues within the context of Muslim-Germany in an effort to "assist those who wish to seek positive change in structuring minor-

ity-majority relations" in Germany and beyond.

The report illustrates that despite the strong Islamic roots embedded in the 3.5 million Islamic population of Germany, little has been done to achieve a permanent Islamic presence. This lack of presence partly arises from a lack of "formal German citizenship," and the "guest-workers perception," both of which she explores in detail.

## ■ The Universal Theology of Liberation: Views from Muslim history



A look at liberation and struggle - jihad - as part of a universal theology of liberation. With papers by Mohammad Nasrin Nasir and Daud Abdullah.

## ■ Report of the Trial Monitor in the Ma'ameer and Adary Park Cases, Bahrain, 2010



IHRC sent A b e d Choudhury to monitor the sentencing hearing of 10 Bahraini men, from the village of Ma'ameer, charged with

the murder of a migrant worker. The hearing was held on 5th July 2010. On a previous visit Choudhury had visited the village of Ma'ameer to collect information on the treatment of the 10 men in prison. He also observed trial proceedings of four Bahraini men charged with arson attacks in Adary Park, Manama.

This is a report of his observations and conclusions, as well as his observations pertaining to a visit to the village of Ma'ameer, and reveals a catalogue of human rights concerns.

## ■ IHRC Press

IHRC has launched a second publishing arm called IHRC Press to showcase some of

**IHRC Press**

[www.ihrc.org.uk](http://www.ihrc.org.uk)

the best writing in the Muslim world. Its first title *The Quest for Unity* and other selected works, by Imam Achmad Cassiem calls for the unity of Muslims in the pursuit of justice for all. Published at the end of 2010, the report became timely in the wake of the Arab uprisings which saw the intervention of the West with attempt to stoke sectarian conflict as a way of undermining these struggles for justice.

2012 will see the publication of a volume of spoken word poetry by young and upcoming artists.

## ■ Translations of IHRC work

Yahudi Perspektifinden: Anti-Siyonizm, the Turkish version of Anti-Zionism: Jewish Perspectives was launched in Istanbul in July 2010.

Pour La Liberté, the French translation of For Liberty, IHRC's report on the effects of the Hijab ban in French schools is due to be published late 2011 for free download from the IHRC website.

## ■ Briefings

IHRC's series of Genocide Memorial Essays concluded at the end of 2010 with essays on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Darfur; the Hebron Massacre; the Transatlantic Slave Trade; and the Nanjing Massacre.

Further briefings on Bahrain, Spain and bodyscanners, as well as the Holy Land Five. (incomplete sentence, please check with Arzu)

Additionally IHRC submitted a number of responses to government consultations on police powers and anti-terrorism laws, as well as the use of bodyscanners.

By Arzu Merali



The launch of IHRC's report *Yahudi perspektifinden anti-siyonizm* in Turkish, Turkey



Continued from page 3

that would make world peace a real and tangible aspiration, not the ever elusive mirage it currently is. It is with this confidence that we must challenge the collective demonization of Islam and Muslims, and must refuse to compromise on a religion established on the principle of the character of a Prophet who was sent as a mercy to all creation.

Another worrying trend has been the continued rise of fascism, particularly in European countries such as France, UK, Netherlands and Denmark. Such movements thrive on the atmosphere of fear and hate that is actively encouraged by the attitudes and pronouncements of those in places of influence in government and the media. Let us not forget Prime Minister David Cameron's "Muscular Liberalism" speech delivered in Munich on 5 February 2011, which was heralded by Nick Griffin, chairman of the extremist British National Party, as "a further huge leap for our ideas into the political mainstream."

Similar trends can be seen across the Atlantic, with Islamophobic discourse fast becoming a mainstay of American national politics, whether we look at the rhetoric espoused by the infamous Tea Party; the inflated controversy over the Park51 community centre in Lower Manhattan; the introduction of bills in 13 US states to "ban Sharia law;" or even the political and media hysteria over President Obama's birth certificate. In order to reflect on these developments, IHRC intends for its currently annual Hate Crime report to be made into a bi-annual fixture, with the intention of researching new arenas, such as the US.

Perhaps the most dangerous weapon, however, being sharpened in the arsenal against Islam today is that of sectarianism. For the last 100 years, nationalism was used most effectively to divide and rule the territories of the old empires. Now, with the emergence of Muslim identity and character, a concerted attempt is underway to exploit sectarianism for the coming 100 years to maintain divisions and consolidate rule so that Muslims remain a conquered and defeated people.

Something we would always be wise to remember is that the primary concern of Western powers when it comes to the entire Muslim world, in the Middle East and beyond, is and always has been the state of Israel. This remains the case, whether in their damage control manoeuvres and efforts during the Arab revolts, or in their support for the dismantling and fracturing of states. As protests were underway in Tahrir Square, the questions most Western journalists and analysts were asking related to the potential implications for Israel's future relationship with Egypt, not the legitimate aspirations of the Egyptian people.

The real battle is always ongoing. It is up to all of us to realise that for real change, we must train ourselves to recognise and distinguish those elements that are hostile to our cause. In order to counter all of the numerous strategies that they employ, we must constantly be alert and devise strategies of our own, making a point to strengthen and empower those who resist and stand up to oppression and imperial designs.

We must all come together in open rejection of fascist tendencies on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond and clearly recall that the same language of hate that begins with intolerance ultimately ends in the killing fields of Auschwitz and Srebrenica. 'Never Again' must transcend being a mere emotive slogan and become a unifying rallying call for people of all religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds to ensure that never again will humans be allowed to sink to such inhuman depths of depravity.

It is also important for us all to recognise that the way forward lies in continuing to defend all the oppressed peoples and in supporting the Islamic awakening spreading across the entire region. We must do our utmost to ensure this awakening is not hijacked for the benefit and interest of US imperial hegemony, which manifests itself most clearly in its unqualified and absolute support for the oppressive occupying Zionist entity and its apparatus of terror. We must continue our struggle and persevere so that justice may prevail.

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

# The Selective Coverage of the Islamic Awakening by the Media

**D**uring the 'Islamic Awakening' IHRC was faced with the enormous task of doing justice to the extent of human rights abuses that took place throughout the various campaigns of state oppression in North-Africa and the Middle-East. This included publicising these abuses, starting campaigns, liaising with those affected and pressuring decision and law makers into acting to stop them.

The pace at which the events unfolded across the region was also unprecedented, and a tremendous boost to those protesting against oppression across the Muslim world. These rapid events on the ground coincided with a great utilisation of social-networking websites, and resulted in our contacts across the Middle-East and North-Africa relaying information to IHRC at a much quicker rate than ever before. Whilst this meant that we had greater access to what was happening, our limited resources meant that we were often unable to cover everything that was going on.

As this was the case, we accordingly chose to dedicate the majority of our efforts to publicising abuses that were not being covered by the mainstream media, or being dealt with through international courts and decision making bodies.

Throughout 2011, the overwhelming international

**"...it is abundantly clear that the western powers have taken advantage of the upheavals in the Middle-East and North-Africa so that they can extend their influence over the Islamic world"**

response to the suppression of protests in Syria was a stark contrast to its lacklustre response to the Bahraini regime's systematic repression of its own protesters. The United States, the European Union and the United Nations Security Council were quick to condemn the use of force by the Syrian regime against its people and lead efforts to sanction it.

Yet when it came to Bahrain, they were mealy mouthed claiming that the uprising was 'sectarian' and therefore 'ambiguous'. This was meant to absolve them of any political obligation to ensure that the Khalifa regime respected the will of the Bahraini people, and cease its campaign of brutality.

They also said nothing about the Saudi-led GCC military coalition enlisted by the Bahraini regime to help suppress protesters. At the same time western powers speculated

that Iran might be interfering in Syrian affairs.

It remains to be seen where any of the uprisings are headed. However, it is abundantly clear that the western powers have taken advantage of the upheavals in the Middle-East and North-Africa so that they can extend their influence over the Islamic world, and ensure that the new order which emerges respects previous arrangements. These include access to natural resources, accommodation with the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and the systematic oppression of anyone who wishes to invoke Islamic principles in politics.

Calling for no-fly zones over Libya and Syria, yet expressing anxiety over censoring Western allies in Bahrain, Yemen and Egypt, is a glaring illustration of this double standard. IHRC has remained vigilant against such attempts throughout its campaigning, and endeavours to remain the voice of the voiceless. IHRC believes human rights to be universal, and as such does not discriminate between one struggle against tyranny and another.

At the same time, IHRC strongly rejects the tendency of many human rights organisations and media outlets to deliberately ignore human rights abuses in certain countries, and disproportionately cover those in others.

**By Sasan Aghlani**

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❑ **Police, Protest and Conflict: A Report into the Policing of the Gaza Demonstrations 2008-09.** This report is an examination of how the police in Britain dealt with protests against Israel's war in Gaza. 96pp. £7.

❑ **Europe's Shame: Anti-Muslim Hatred and the Roma of Bulgaria** Based on the report submitted to UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (see p. 6 above). Pub: July 2009. £7.

❑ **Aftermath: Gaza in the Days After the 22 Day War.** (May 2009) A diary account of two lawyers who visited Gaza to col-



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**Canvas Prints, various scenes by and © Muhsin Kilby.** Muhsin Kilby is a London based photographer who has travelled and photographed many parts of the world. His travels have taken him throughout Africa, as well as to the USA, Canada, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and western Europe. He has also written on various issues including Jerusalem and Palestine. **Prints available in two sizes:** 16" x 20" (approx) £95 and 30" x 40" (approx) £189; hand stretched onto 34mm bars and sealed with varnish for extra protection. **Original lightfast UV ink** to keep the print looking vivid. **More scenes also available**, including Water Fountain in Istanbul; Al-Mohad door, Seville, Andalucia; Interiors of Masjid Al-Aqsa and Dome of the Rock; and more images of the Ka'ba. Total 28 scenes. See IHRC website for details: [www.ihrc.org/catalog](http://www.ihrc.org/catalog).

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# Delegation Visits Egypt During Islamic Awakening

Between 7th-11th of March, IHRC sent a delegation to Egypt on a fact-finding mission, tasked with gathering information about the popular uprising taking place in the country. Among the delegation were IHRC Chair Massoud Shadjareh; IHRC Campaigns Officer Salma Ashraf; Universal Justice Network (UJN) Secretariat

Mohideen Abdulkader; and Imam Mohamed al-Asi, activist and formerly of Islamic Centre of Washington, USA. During the course of this visit, the delegation spoke to many political parties, civil-society groups and individuals about the nature of the uprisings against the regime of Hosni Mubarak. These included the Muslim Brotherhood, Coalition of the

Youth of the Revolution (CYR), the Doctors Syndicate of the Freedom Committee, the Labour Party, and the Hisham Mubarak Law Centre (HMLC). IHRC was one of the only groups on the ground liaising with the Islamist participants in the revolution. In this respect it filled the vacuum deliberately left by the Western media's coverage of the uprisings. Whilst not all

groups and individuals that IHRC spoke to had an explicit ideology, they all wanted Islamic groups be included in the new Egyptian political order emerging in the wake of Hosni Mubarak's removal from power. Many expressed their wish to strengthen their ties with the IHRC. Ayman Nour of the Al-Ghad Liberal Party expressed surprise that there was an Islamic human rights group in the West. "Challenging the discourses of human rights that are an international currency is the duty of every Muslim," he said. "We need to let others know that Islam and human rights are one and the same."

Our interaction with the Egyptian opposition did not begin with the Islamic Awakening. IHRC has been campaigning on behalf of many Egyptian political prisoners from both home and abroad. These have included Khairat Al-Shater, the deputy chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood; Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman; and former head of the Muslim Brotherhood Mohammed Mahdi Akef. A report detailing the findings of this visit to Egypt will be published later in 2011.

By Sasan Aghlani



Delegation meeting the Secretary General of the Labour Party, Dr Magdy Hussein

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## SUCCESS STORY: Release of Khairat Al-Shater- Prisoner of Faith

One of IHRC's many successes this year was the release of Khairat al-Shater, the deputy chairman of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Al-Shater was imprisoned without charge in 2005 under Egypt's notorious Emergency Law imposed at the outset of Hosni Mubarak's rule. He was arrested following parliamentary elections in which the Muslim Brotherhood won 80 seats.

According to political analysts, al-Shater's detention along with other active members of the Muslim Brotherhood was part of the government's policy of suppressing Egypt's most popular opposition movement.

Although in 2005 the Supreme Court acquitted al-Shater and ordered his release, in April 2008 he was referred to a military tribunal where he was sentenced to seven years imprisonment without any right of appeal. Al-Shater entered prison with health problems which further deteriorated during his detention.

Following his imprisonment IHRC campaigned for Al-Shater's release and made him one of its prominent prisoners of faith. Al-Shater's detention once again drew attention to Egypt's military courts which were used by Mubarak as a savage tool of political and social repression.

On 8 March 2011, shortly after the people's revolution ousted Mubarak, an IHRC delegation visited Khairat Al-Shater at his home to congratulate him on his release.

Al-Shater spoke about his prison conditions telling of how he was denied family visits, proper health care, placed in solitary confinement and prevented from receiving letters.

However, pressure from human rights organizations led to a marked improvement in the treatment of Muslim Brotherhood detainees.



Since 1968 al-Shater has spent more than ten years in Egyptian prisons. Unfortunately this did not extend to political prisoners from other Islamic groups, who continued to be mistreated. Al-Shater praised the international media and human rights groups for piling pressure on the Egyptian government. He highlighted the importance of campaigns saying that even if they didn't lead to prisoners' release they provided detainees and their families with emotional and psychological support, and raised public awareness of political injustices. "We would like to thank, honour and respect every campaigner, their efforts have been soothing for prisoners and our families," said al-Shater. "We felt that people were sharing and knowing about our suffering, and it was a contributing factor to our early release. We would also like to help, support any further campaign that IHRC launches in the future, whether in Egypt or any other Islamic country." Since being released al-Shater has gone back to his work with the Muslim Brotherhood trying to shape the laws and systems that will govern the new Egypt. IHRC's work has not ended with the release of al-Shater and it continues to call for the freeing of all political prisoners in Egypt.

By Salma Ashraf



# Boycott Israeli Dates Campaign

### Illegal Settlements

In 2004 the International Court of Justice ruled that the Israeli settlements are illegal – they are built on stolen Palestinian land. Growing dates is one of the major agricultural activities carried out by nearly half of the illegal Israeli settlements located in the Jordan Valley – it's their most profitable crop, and contributes significantly to their economic viability. Most of the Israeli date crop - up to 80%, is exported, mainly to Europe where it has around 10% market share. In 2005, dates were Israel's leading fruit export. If you oppose the settlements target their dates.

### Exploitation

Picking of the dates is hard work, so the 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 5am, left perched on palms that soar to a height of 10 or even 12 metres, and left there swaying in the wind for up to 8 hours without even a toilet break. All day long the workers cling to the tree with one arm and work with the other to meet their quota. They only come down when the crane returns at the end of the day. If they complain or fail to meet their employer's target they will lose their jobs.

### Child Labour

The Israelis prefer to employ children, even issuing them official work per-

mits, as they are quick and light, can climb trees faster, work for less and are easier to cheat and humiliate. 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

### The two major Israeli companies involved are Agrexco and Hadiklaim.

Agrexco, half owned by the Israeli state, handles 60-70% of all settlement produce. Its dates have brand names Carmel, Jordan Plains and Jordan Valley. Carmel boast that they have managed to produce an early crop of dates in time to meet the Ramadan demand from Europe's Muslims!

Hadiklaim, the Israeli Date Growers cooperative, which includes illegal settler plantations in the Jordan Valley, sells 65% of all Israeli dates. Its dates have brand names King Solomon and Jordan River. It also supplies Israeli dates to supermarkets and retail chains who market them under their own brand names. These include Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda and Waitrose. Sometimes they are labelled "Produced in the West Bank" or "Jordan Valley" – remember these are not Palestinian dates.

### Plea From Palestine

Peace activists who visited the Palestinian village of Fasayl in the Jordan Valley discovered that villagers

are slowly being forced off their land by the Israeli army for future settlement expansion. The only livelihood left open to them is to work for Carmel Agrexco. The activists even spoke to two Palestinian children under the age of 12 who were working for Carmel. The Palestinian workers whose land had been stolen and were forced to work for Carmel in order to feed their families urged them to take action against Carmel Agrexco and other companies that support Israeli apartheid. What excuse is left for us not to boycott Israel?

### Campaign

This is the fourth year running that Innovative Minds and the Islamic Human Rights Commission have launched the Ramadan "Boycott Israeli Dates", campaign calling on campaigners to create awareness in their communities about the boycotting of Israeli goods, and in particular Israeli dates. It is perhaps the most successful year so far with leaflets having to be reprinted three times in order to meet demand. Organisations supporting the campaign include London BDS (londonbds.org), Palestinian Return Centre (prc.org.uk), and the Muslim Association of Britain (mabonline.net). Special thanks to sister Huma and brother Tapash for their tremendous dedication to this campaign.

The video "Boycott Israeli Dates", specially created to support the campaign, can be viewed or download at [www.inminds.com/boycott-israeli-dates.php](http://www.inminds.com/boycott-israeli-dates.php)

## TO BOYCOTT M&S IS TO BOYCOTT ISRAELI APARTHEID

In January 2008, in a reply to an IHRC letter enquiring about M&S' relation to the State of Israel, Chief Executive Sir Stuart Rose stated: "We do not have a 'special' relationship with any government."

BUT Lord Marcus Sieff, former chairman of M&S, wrote that one of the objectives of M&S is to aid the economic development of Israel (Management: The Marks & Spencer Way, Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1990). An M&S spokesperson explicitly confirmed that "We are as close to Israel as we have ever been." (Jewish Chronicle, 22 December 2000)

BUT M&S supports Israel with \$233 million in trade every year (Jerusalem Report, 5 June 2000). The Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) in New York reports: "The clothier bought about \$325 million worth of merchandise from Israel last year." (JTA 13 December 2000, Richard Allen Greene, 'British store shrugs off boycott threat from Muslims')

BUT In 1998, Benjamin Netanyahu, then Prime Minister of Israel, presented Sir Richard Greenbury of M&S with the "Jubilee Award", the highest tribute ever awarded by the State of Israel, in recognition of his achievements in strengthening the Israeli economy. (Virtual Israel 02 February 2001, Internet Archive: [http://web.archive.org/web/20010215155146/www.amflowers.com/awards/index\\_company.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/20010215155146/www.amflowers.com/awards/index_company.htm))

Our concern is not with M&S' Jewish roots, but its historic and continuing support for Israel. This is not an issue of race or religion, but human rights.

FACT In 2008 alone, 66 homes were demolished in Gaza and the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, due to houses being 'built without permits' and for alleged military purposes. Those operations left 349 adults and 184 children homeless. (B'Tselem 2008, [http://www.btselem.org/english/Planning\\_and\\_Building/Statistics.asp](http://www.btselem.org/english/Planning_and_Building/Statistics.asp)

and <http://www.btselem.org/english/Razing/Statistics.asp>)

FACT M&S brand socks, underwear and lingerie are supplied mainly by Israeli textile giant Delta Galil, Israel's largest manufacturer and marketer of textiles. (Corporate Watch 2009, <http://www.corporatewatch.org/?lid=3207>)

FACT Israeli suit manufacturer Bagir "outfits 1 in 6 UK men, mainly through Marks and Spencer." (Israel 21c 28 April 2008, [http://www.israel21c.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2006&catid=58:environment&Itemid=101](http://www.israel21c.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2006&catid=58:environment&Itemid=101))

FACT M&S admits their UK suppliers purchase dates from well-known settlement exporter Hadiklaim, though this contract prohibits purchase from Palestinian Territories. (Profundo 2009, <http://www.soas.ac.uk/law/peace/ceast/file49531.pdf>)

FACT M&S also stocks grapes, lychees, figs, plums, dates, fresh herbs, sweet potatoes and potatoes from Israeli state-owned Agrexco, another settlement exporter (Palestine Israel Ethical Shopping Initiative [PIESI] 2008, <http://www.easi-piesi.org/marks.html>)

'I've been very deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa. I have seen the humiliation of the Palestinians at checkpoints and roadblocks, suffering like us when young white police officers prevented us from moving about.' Archbishop Desmond Tutu (The Guardian 29 April 2002, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/apr/29/comment>)

For detailed information and further research findings on M&S, please visit <http://www.inminds.co.uk/boycott-marks-and-spencer.html>

# BOYCOTT ISRAELI DATES

## Think of the Palestinians this Ramadan

[WWW.INMINDS.COM/BOYCOTT-ISRAELI-DATES.PHP](http://WWW.INMINDS.COM/BOYCOTT-ISRAELI-DATES.PHP)

Check the label, avoid dates produced in Israel and its illegal settlements (usually labelled West Bank or Jordan Valley)

Israeli dates are sold under the following brands:







# IHRC Prisoner of Faith Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman Remains Imprisoned

**S**heikh Omar Abdul Rahman was imprisoned in the United States in 1995 under controversial sedition laws last used during the American Civil War.

He was convicted of being the ideological inspiration for the perpetrators of the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing in New York.

The religious scholar, who is completely blind and confined to a wheelchair, is now 73 years of age and his health has deteriorated significantly after spending 18 years in solitary confinement. He has relayed to IHRC that he has been subjected to physical abuse by the prison guards.

Sheikh Omar has been part of

IHRC's 'Prisoners of Faith' campaign since its inception in 1997. This is a project aimed at raising awareness of and freeing those persecuted around the world because of their Islamic faith and identity. IHRC has been the only human rights organisation campaigning for his release.

There is a good chance that he could die soon, and his family have requested that he be able to spend his last days with them in Egypt.

Educated at the prestigious al-Azhar University in Cairo, Sheikh Omar has been a harsh critic and opponent of the former regime of Hosni Mubarak. He has welcomed initiatives by the Islamic Group, which he for-



merly led, to end political violence.

In 2003 the leadership of the Islamic Group renounced violence. Some high-ranking members have since been released by the Egyptian authorities.

Sheikh Omar's former lawyer Lynne Stewart, the only person allowed to communicate with him during his incarceration, was also convicted and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in 2005 for relaying messages between the sheikh and his family.

IHRC has been central in these efforts to bring the case of Sheikh Omar to the attention of the US and the now interim Egyptian government. We have assisted the Sheikh's family and supporters in

organising protests in front of US embassies worldwide and in front of the headquarters of Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF).

In 2011, a delegation of IHRC met with his son Dr. Abdullah, who urged IHRC to persist with their campaigning. He told IHRC that his father is following IHRC's campaigns closely, and wishes to work with the group if he is ever released.

Although SCAF has responded positively and formally requested the Sheikh's release there has been no response from the United States government.

**By Salma Ashraf**

## IHRC Thanks Its Campaigners for Remembering Ahmad

**S**ince he was murdered by Bahraini security forces on 30th March 2011, IHRC has left no stone unturned in its campaign for 15 year-old Sayed Ahmad Saeed Shams, including trying to get one of the world's most famous football clubs to mark his death.

Ahmad was ruthlessly gunned down outside his home in the village of Sa'ar whilst playing football in the jersey of his favourite team, Manchester United. The point-blank shot to his head failed to kill him instantly and Ahmad was left to die in excruciating pain.

Ahmad's father told IHRC that his son bore clear marks of pistol-whipping on his neck, and that security personnel later forced the hospital to falsify his death certificate. However, a picture can tell a thousand words, and images of young Ahmad with a bullet wound and bruising on his body tell the savage truth of his experience.

IHRC asked Manchester United to commemorate the 40th day anniversary of Ahmad's death with a moment's silence before its match against Chelsea FC on 8 May. This gesture would have demonstrated the club's commitment to its fans worldwide, whilst raising awareness of the gross human rights violations that take place in Bahrain.

Whilst Manchester United refused to hold a moments silence for one of its young fans, the campaign succeeded in highlighting the plight of the Bahraini people, and reminding football clubs of their sense of social responsibility.

Ahmad, like many other young boys across the Middle-East, had plastered his bedroom walls with pictures of his heroes at Manchester United. In this most basic sense, people like Sir Alex Ferguson have honoured their pledge through the Manchester United Foundation to "inspire young people to build a better life for themselves".

Yet the harsh reality is that inspiring young children like Ahmad is simply not enough. Whilst it is easy for groups



to pledge this obligation to their supporters they must also be ready to help realise the conditions in which children like Ahmad are able to fulfil their potential.

Manchester United's failure to remember Ahmad has been rightly condemned as hypocritical by IHRC supporters and campaigners who have written letters and emails calling on the club to remember its fans whether they be in England or elsewhere. Others have expressed their support for the campaign by writing messages on various websites, forums and social-networking sites. Their dedication to this campaign has been truly remarkable, and IHRC believes that they have taken a huge stride in linking human rights activists across the world through the medium of sport. To all those who supported this campaign, IHRC wishes to extend to them their warmest thanks and appreciation.

**By Sasan Aghlani**

## IHRC International Observer

**I**n March 2011 I was asked by the IHRC to travel to Albania to observe the trial of Artan Kristo.

Artan, a charismatic Albanian preacher with a growing following, is currently appealing against his conviction for making statements that allegedly promote violence and terrorism.

Artan has been at the forefront of promoting Islam in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia since the fall of communism. His appeal is mainly to the youth who see him as a reviver of traditional Islam in a land where religion was suffocated and killed by the yoke of communism. There are many preachers with similar views to Artan's.

The "offending" statements were made during a public lecture, apparently in 2006, which was recorded and subsequently posted on Youtube and a number of other websites in 2009 by somebody in Kosovo without Artan's knowledge. The statements in question were made when a member of the audience posed a question to Artan about Jihad.

Artan's students and followers stress that he does not preach violence. On the contrary, he has openly debated and disapproved of preachers who support terrorist activities or any form of non-state armed warfare. Artan was in fact speaking against the use of violence, not promoting it. The statements about fighting to kill and not to die had been taken out of context. Artan was arguing that when an individual is part of a state army and he takes part in state sanctioned warfare, then he fights to win and he does not go just to die. The object of this argument was to refute those who said it was acceptable to commit suicide to harm the "enemy".

At Artan's appeal hearing he was held in a cage at one end of the courtroom. He seemed to be in good spirits, smiling and joking with his lawyer and students. After the hearing I spoke to Artan's defence lawyer, Ilia Ilia, about the case. He stated that the prosecution had no proof for what they were alleging and that the charges came about purely because the authorities wanted to silence his client.

Ilia pointed out that Albania's terrorism laws only came into force in 2007. Yet Artan's speech was made in 2006 and was not a criminal offence at the time. In any case the prosecution are unable to prove exactly when the speech was made.

Ilia also said that the case was the first of



its kind but more may follow if the prosecution succeeds. However he believes that pressure from the international community can make a difference to the outcome. Adverse international publicity may stop the militantly secular Albanian authorities from continuing this prosecution.

Albania itself has always been a religiously diverse nation. Under Ottoman rule Muslims, Christians and Jews lived side by side. As the Ottoman Empire disintegrated, there followed several decades of political turmoil. After the Second World War the Communist Party established the Peoples' Republic of Albania. The Communist Party immediately started repressing all religion. It promulgated laws to dispossess religious institutions of their properties. Religious leaders were imprisoned or executed and in 1967 Albania declared itself an atheist state.

However since the fall of communism in 1990/1991, Islam and other religions have slowly resurfaced. Yet Albania and Albanians remain deeply secular.

After reading the prosecution and defence argument as well as a transcript of the offending statements and Artan Kristo's explanation of them, IHRC feels that there has been no incitement to terrorist acts. On the contrary, Artan has been extremely critical of those who espouse violence. IHRC will continue to monitor and highlight Artan's case.

**By Abed Choudhury**



# Hijab ban reinvigorates Azeri Islamic movement

**I**n October 2010, the ruling regime in Azerbaijan banned hijab in public schools and revived an unprecedented socio-political activism of the Islamic movement. The mobilization is not only domestic, but also international. For the first time an international conference on an Islamic issue in Azerbaijan was organized. The conference under the title International Solidarity — Islamophobia, Hijab and Muslim Prisoners in Azerbaijan took place on the 6th of March 2011 in Istanbul. The conference was organized by the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC).

The conference attracted notable participants from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Iran, Malaysia, US, Canada and the UK. However, it is not the size of the conference that is crucial, but its essence. Almost all international conferences relating to Azerbaijan focus on Western-secular dogmas. Therefore, the Istanbul conference is a first mass scale international public relations event of the Islamic movement in Azerbaijan.

Apart from addressing the potential solutions to the illegitimate ban on hijab, the conference also gave an opportunity for the Azeri Ulema to present their perspective on the overall situation in Azerbaijan. Islamic scholars from Azerbaijan that attended the conference



The conference attracted a wide array of participants from all over the world.

included Abgul Suleimanov, Faik Valizade, Elchin Aliakbarov and Ilham Aliyev. The position of the Azeri 'ulama showed that the Islamic movement is no longer shying away from underlining the illegitimacy of the ruling elite in Azerbaijan and its deplorable record of oppression and corruption. The speeches of the Azeri 'ulama were no longer "defensive" in nature.

The hijab ban in Azerbaijan forced many Islamic organizations that previously never dared to challenge the repressive regime to confront the establishment. Even though this is a significant phenomenon for the Islamic movement in Azerbaijan, where the ruling regime exterminated the authentic opposition forces over the past 15 years, the future

of the Islamic movement in Azerbaijan is still shaky. The movement is still relatively passive and politically immature. However, it possesses an unshakable credibility throughout diverse segments of society, a luxury that no other socio-political movement can afford in Azerbaijan today.

Even though the secular nationalist groups have been completely co-opted by the ruling regime and lost political relevance in the country, the Islamic movement in Azerbaijan is still unable to fill in the political vacuum in

the country.

The main stumbling point of the Islamic movement in Azerbaijan is that it lacks concrete socio-political and economic programs, along with a consistent and powerful methodology of political struggle that is not dictated by the regime. The latter is a problem facing all Islamic socio-political movements except for Hizbullah and Hamas. The waning credibility of the Ikhwan al-Muslimeen in Egypt shows that a movement with a strong socio-political program can still suffer a significant setback if its methodology of action is determined by the regime rather than the movement itself.

Another significant factor of the conference was its location. Ten years ago an Islamic conference in Turkey challenging the ruling regime in Azerbaijan would be unthinkable. The fact that Turkish authorities let it take place shows that the despotic regime in Baku is losing regional support. It also lifts the "Iranian"

label from the Islamic movement in Azerbaijan. The regime can no longer accuse it of being an Iranian protégé and easily demonize the movement within the westoxicated segments of the Azeri society.

The ruling regime in Azerbaijan thought that arresting Muslim scholars and activists, who are vehemently opposing the regime's hijab ban, would silence the Islamic movement. Instead it has regenerated the Islamic movement to an unprecedented degree. How the Islamic movement will be able to use this momentum will depend on its ability to galvanize the support of the people beyond its main constituency. If the Islamic movement manages to present itself to the broader Azeri society as the only force capable of liberating the country from the clutches of the current regime, its success will be guaranteed. To achieve this it will need to acquire political maturity which it certainly will, since time is on their side.



Distinguished panel addressing the dire human rights situation in Azerbaijan

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2010 was a year full of horror and misery for the Palestinians and IHRC found itself once again at the forefront of efforts to publicise the nature of the crisis. The events of May 2010, when Israeli naval forces stormed an unarmed humanitarian flotilla trying to break the Israeli siege of Gaza killing nine civilians, led to an international outcry. Israel's brutality was laid bare for all to see.

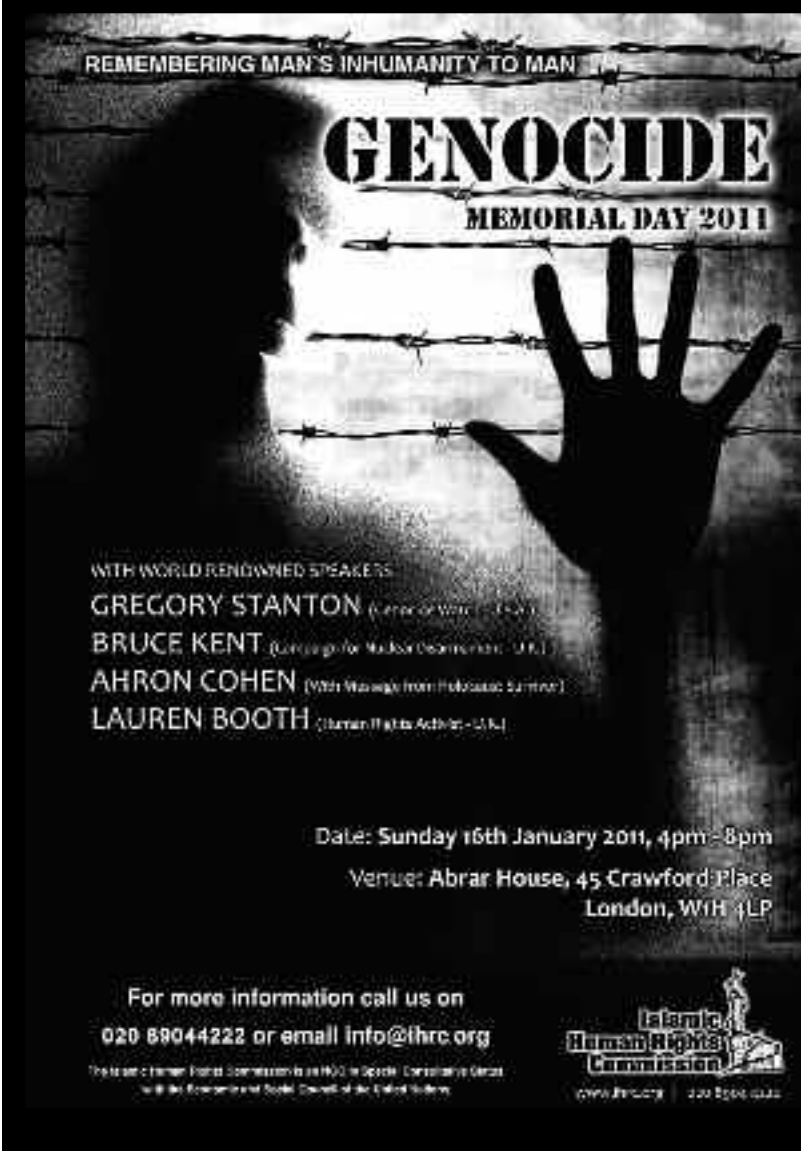
respecting Palestinian rights. The campaign was intensified during the month of Ramadhan with IHRC's 'Boycott Israeli Dates' initiative, aimed at stopping consumers from buying produce grown by settlers on occupied Palestinian land.

these vicious attacks only served to encourage the protestors. They felt that their suffering paled alongside the innocent people of Palestine who were being bombarded by jets, artillery and even the indiscriminate white phosphorus, whose use against civilians is banned under international law.

**By Zainab Zahra Bhalloo**



# Man's Inhumanity to Man



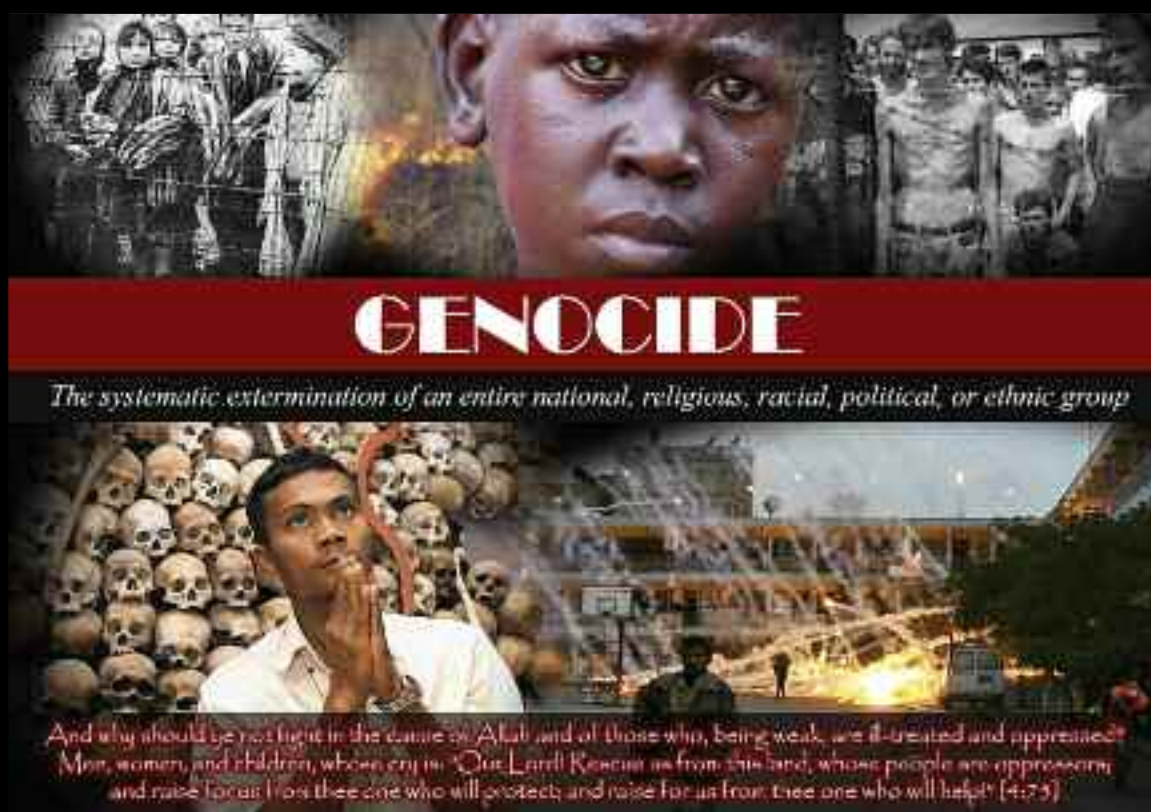
This year's Genocide Memorial Day (GMD) took place on the 16th of January with a special focus on Hiroshima and Nagasaki where the idea of nuclear weapons being genocidal weapons took root. To date

Another genocide highlighted on the day was the Transatlantic African Slave Trade. The direct impact of African slavery can still be felt today. Although the trade generated immense wealth for American and European business interests it had the opposite effect on Africa by stripping the continent of a whole generation of economically active people.

began a devastating 22-day bombing campaign on the impoverished people of Gaza leaving over 1400 people dead, thousands of homes destroyed and huge swathes of flora uprooted, illustrates how lessons have not been learnt from past genocides and how educating people about past events is still as crucial as ever.

IIHRC is aiming to make GMD an internationally recognised day, so that the words 'Never Again' can have universal meaning if humankind is to move towards a truly just and harmonious global society.

**By Zainab Zahra Bhalloo**





# Another Year at the UN

## IHRC at the UN

Over the past year, IHRC has attended a number of UN Human Rights Council meetings in Geneva. IHRC representatives Massoud Shadjareh, Maidah Rao and Ahmed Uddin travelled to Geneva and participated in many events and sessions relating to human rights abuses across the world.

IHRC has submitted written and oral statements to UN proceedings, aiming to ensure that delegates and officials are informed of human rights issues and violations, with particular focus on the mistreatment of Muslims in both Muslim and non-Muslim states. Prominent amongst these is the situation of Myanmar. In September 2010 IHRC organised a meeting to discuss the human rights abuses against the Rohingyas. The Rohingyas are a Muslim ethnic minority in Myanmar who are subjected to multiple restrictions and human rights violations - among them, restriction of movement, forced labour, forced eviction, land confiscation and various forms of extortion and arbitrary taxation. Chairman Tun Kin from the Burmese Rohingya Organisation attended the session and was able to answer many questions. Briefings and reports on this issue are available on IHRC's website.

The IHRC organised a session in



**Arzu Merali contributing on behalf of IHRC at UNESCO, France**

March 2011 discussing Civil and Human Rights abuses in the United States. The US is one of the world's greatest abusers of human rights, thanks to its status as the world's dominant superpower. Amongst the issues discussed during the meeting was the profiling of Muslims by security services and concurrent mass arrests; detaining individuals without charge; rendition; domestic detention policies in North America; torture and the effect of Guantanamo on global perceptions of law and imprisonment. Panellists included Asim Qureshi, of

Cageprisoners, Imam Abdul Alim Musa from Masjid Al-Islam in Washington & the Institute of Contemporary Islamic Thought (ICIT), and Ahmed Uddin from the Islamic Human Rights Commission.

One of IHRC's main campaigns has been the ongoing crisis in Bahrain. On 8 June 2011, IHRC organised an emergency briefing side panel on the human rights situation in Bahrain at the UN. Since 14 February 2011, Bahrain has seen the emergence of a political movement calling for freedom, democracy, and the revival of a communal partnership in the framework of the civil movements seeking justice in the Arab world. This was met with brutal suppression by the Bahraini regime and its security apparatus, and the arrival of Saudi-led military forces. IHRC is worried about the ongoing crisis in Bahrain, and concerned that coverage of the situation by the mainstream media is inadequate. IHRC highlighted some of the many instances of government oppression and suppression of human rights that have occurred during this period, all of which have roots in an historic and institutionalised system of inequality and injustice. Amongst the speakers were Chairman of Islamic Human Rights Commission Massoud Shadjareh, Chairman of Al-Haq Movement Saeed Shahabi, Chairman for the Committee against

Torture in Bahrain Rodney Shakespeare and Chairman of the Bahrain Freedom Movement Jaffar Al-Hasabi.

Details of the statements and reports submitted can be found on IHRC's website.

## IHRC at the UNESCO

Islamic Human Rights Commission was represented at UNESCO in Paris, in May 2011 at a Non Aligned Movement event on the role of media in building up intercultural communication. Speaking on behalf of IHRC and presenting the findings of its landmark report into the media was Arzu Merali, one of the authors of the report. The presentation looked at some of the recommendations made in the UK context and also discussed how the McBride report from the 1980s provided certain critiques of

mainstream hegemonic media which were still pertinent today. In particular the presentation looked at how the duty outlined in the report for the media to provide appropriate programming that reflected the special needs of women, minorities and children still needed to be addressed in a meaningful way. In a presentation made to Non-Aligned Movement countries, Merali spoke of how with the rise of media such as Al-Jazeera, Press TV, CCTV and Russia Today, there was scope for other types of media from NAM countries to fill the gaps outlined by McBride.

The event was attended by over a 100 ambassadors and NGO representatives. The IHRC presentation will soon be online on the IHRC Youtube and Vimeo Channels.

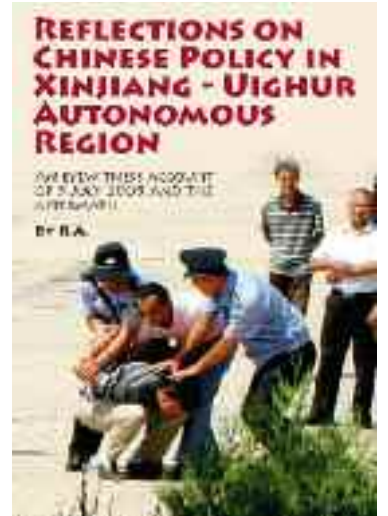
**By Naba Al-Nahi**

## Chinese Policy in Xinjiang

An eyewitness account of the events of 5 July 2009 and the aftermath.

Published 15 July 2011 / ISBN 978-1-903718-80-3 / 85pp / Islamic Human Rights Commission / Free Download

Periodically, the issue of China's actions in its Northwestern province of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region comes to the fore. The most recent of these incidents was in July 2009 when so-called riots in the region led to the arrests and detentions of many Uighurs as well as the deaths of many involved in what began as peaceful protests. Portrayed by the media in China and to some extent the West, as the violent rioting of extremist separatists, rampaging and killing ethnic Han, the events have fallen away from scrutiny and a more truthful account given little opportunity to surface.



This essay recounts the run up to July 2009 in XUAR and provides an eyewitness account of the events and their aftermath. They are presented here in a bid to kick start the type of dialogue with the Chinese authorities needed to help China's anti-imperialist ambitions have better realisation within its borders.



**IHRC's side panel event at the UN on Bahrain**

### Continued from page 1

ranks of martyrs. This moment arrived through steadfast endurance and obedience of the commands of Allah and acting purely on the basis of religiously inspired motives and ends:

"For those who respond to Allah and the messenger, despite the persecution they suffer, and maintain their good works, and lead a righteous life, a great reward." [3:172]

Since its inception IHRC has been working with numerous NGO's around the world to bring about this very moment. The obligation to serve Allah and bring about justice is at the very foundation of its existence. A summary of the work of what IHRC has been doing over the past year is contained within this newsletter. We realise that the work that we have accomplished is only the tip of the iceberg, and there is much work that needs to be done. When it is cut off at one point, evil raises its head somewhere else. This is an ongoing battle which we will not give up.

It is a pity that many do not

see this obligation of bringing about social justice as an Islamic duty. Muslims are quick to build a mosque, sponsor an orphan, assist in relief in disaster zones, which are all very meritorious acts. However, alongside these we also have the responsibility of upholding justice. Many forget that social justice is one of the core values and highest ideals of Islam. This burden cannot be championed by only a few groups of people. Societal obligations necessitate cooperation and call for the development of communities that are functional, self-aware and highly organised.

What we have is a few groups of activists championing the cause and they are seldom fully equipped to deal with the task at hand. Everyone needs to assist; it is an act of ibadah (worship) to attend to this cause. If the Muslim community neglects its societal obligations, each Muslim bears the moral responsibility for the failure of the Muslim community.

The Muslim community is blessed with an immense pool of skills and talents. If you are unqualified for the job, then let

that not be an excuse to remain passive. Whether you are a businessman, a taxi driver, lawyer or a doctor, every individual can play a role. "Whatever is necessary to fulfill an obligation is an obligation itself", according to Islamic law. It is the highest priority for Muslims to protect human life, but the protection of lives cannot be achieved without financial resources. So financing the cause in itself becomes an obligation for the community.

Please take time out to read the work of IHRC in this newsletter. We would be grateful for your generous donations as the work of IHRC cannot continue without the support of the community. By acting now you will be helping to ensure that injustice does not prevail.

"We pass through this world but once. Few tragedies can be more extensive than the stunting of life, few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive or even to hope, by a limit imposed from without, but falsely identified as laying within" — Stephen Jay Gould (The Mismeasure of Man)

**By Ahmed Uddin**

**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](mailto: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.**



# Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000

Since it was enacted the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT) has been used to systematically target Muslims. Amongst its lesser known provisions is Section 7, a deliberately blunt instrument that is today regarded by its critics as one of the most powerful instruments of state oppression in the UK.

Schedule 7 allows officials at the UK's ports and borders to stop, question and/or detain people without the need for any reasonable suspicion, in order to determine if they are likely to be engaged in acts of terrorism.

Although those who are stopped or even subsequently detained under schedule 7 are not technically considered to be under arrest the effect is practically the same as a short term detention.

Every day, hundreds of passengers, mostly Muslims, returning from their countries of origin or arriving as tourists are held under Schedule 7 for long hours of questioning by security staff. Most of them are left unaware of what is happening and often not informed why they are being stopped. They are taken to 'interview rooms' where they are asked the most personal questions.

At this stage, detainees do not have the right to remain silent. On the contrary, they are obliged to answer any question the officer asks regardless of how intrusive it may be. Refusing to answer any question is to risk committing a criminal offence punishable by up to three months imprisonment.

IHRC has received many complaints from Muslims in the last two years. The most common issue complained of are the type of questions the examining officers ask. In the course of the interrogation, Muslims are often asked what mosques they attend, how often they pray, about the level of their religiousness, about their 'Britishness', their views on various political issues around the world, shariah law, and sometimes even the most intimate details of their marital lives. Muslims are also asked to give full details of any family or friends they have.

In many cases, questions are not limited to personal matters. Many detainees are asked about third parties, whether they know anyone in the community who acts suspiciously, and whether they want to act as a police informant.

Many Muslims who approached the IHRC reported police mistreatment and intimidating behaviour. Officers often raise their voice, make false assumptions and accusations, and even threaten the detainee with further, prolonged detention if they do not fully co-operate. Many Muslims also state that officers did not inform them that they were being stopped under Schedule 7, even when they explicitly asked the reasons for their detention. Police officers also routinely fail to inform Muslims about their rights under TACT.

For many detainees the story does not end here. Schedule 8 extends police powers to obtain the examined individual's DNA and fingerprints and, should the individual request a lawyer for legal advice and representation, officers can delay that right and continue with their interrogation. Refusing to co-operate will lead to the person being arrested and taken to a police station.

Recent statistics released by the Home Office show that ethnic minority people are disproportionately stopped and held under the anti-terror law used in UK ports and airports. In 2009 and 2010 more than 85,000 stops were carried out under Schedule 7. Of these stops, 2,201 lasted more than an hour and fewer than one in a hundred (0.57%) of them resulted in detention. No information is available on the outcome of any detentions.

The majority of Schedule 7 stops targeted people from black and minority ethnic groups. Asian people accounted for 25% of Schedule 7 stops, although they make up just 5% of the national population. Black people accounted for 8% of stops, but make up 3% of the population. People from other ethnic groups accounted for 22% of stops, though they represent only 1% of the population.

Statistics also show that the targeting of black and minority ethnic groups is even more marked when considering the most intensive Schedule 7 stops. Of the detentions that lasted more than one hour, 41% were of Asian people, 10% were of black people and 30% were of 'other' ethnic minority groups, leaving fewer than 20% that were of white people. Statistics also show that more than 1,200 people have had their fingerprints and DNA taken under Schedule 7 between 2001 and 2009.

This legislation is, without doubt, having a detrimental impact on Muslims in the UK. The use of Schedule 7 causes major disruption, stress, embarrassment, delays to journeys and breeds a climate of fear.

This victimization of Muslims not only creates resentment towards the government but it leaves detainees psychologically scarred by making them feel paranoid, depressed, vulnerable and targeted. Amongst the concerns expressed to the IHRC are fears of being 'watched', black-listed, or being stopped again.

By Naba Al-Nahi

# Hold on to the Rope of Allah - Resisting Sectarianism and Promoting Ummah Unity

The Universal Justice Network (UJN) is a network of NGOs and grassroots organisations from around the world committed to sharing local knowledge and campaigning on strategic issues of justice. The UJN was set up in October 2008 in Penang, Malaysia, under the auspices of Citizens International and Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC). The UJN secretariat is based in Penang and London under these organisations.

This year UJN hosted a two day round-table meeting of civil society figures, ulema and academics to tackle the urgent problems of sectarianism, conflict and continued domination by Western imperial powers in the ummah today. Recent events have once more exposed the use of sectarianism by the USA and its allies in controlling the affairs of Muslim by sowing the seeds of dissension using sectarian discourses and allies from within all sections of the Muslim ummah. We had over 50 participants at the meeting, including those from Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, U.K and U.S.A.

Most of the rest of the round-table meeting was held behind closed doors. This allowed open and frank discussion, as well as a chance for breakout sessions aimed at taking practical steps towards reaching a consensus about how to resolve pressing issues. A further public event was held in Kuala Lumpur, where a small panel of those from the round-table took questions from local figures.

"If we fail to understand that there is a need to reconnect societies, communities, tribes and ethnicities in our region, we will lose the momentum of history. Our future is our sense of common destiny. All of us in the region have a common destiny."

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu.

The revolutions sweeping the Arab-Muslim world are not only aimed at overthrowing dictatorial and hereditary regimes, ushering in an era of democracy, human rights and rule of law; but also to put an end to the divisions created by colonialism. Indeed, it is only by negating the trend of divisiveness that representative politics, respect for the rights of individuals and communities, and the proper rule of law can flourish. Colonialism



**CHARTER 3: 103, document outlining the Qur'anic verse which calls for unity amongst Muslims**

has taken many forms in the last centuries – from violent occupation, to cultural and neo-colonial control of vast swathes of the world's land, peoples and resources.

The 1916 Sykes-Picot Treaty led to the parcelling out of Arab territories among the French and British colonial empires, and the creation of Israel in the heart of the Arab-Muslim world. The treaty betrayed the promises made by the European powers to the Arab elite who supported the European war against Turkey. Such policies of deceit continue, with recent reports produced by the Pentagon sponsored think tank RAND's suggesting the use and promotion of sectarian difference as a strategy to maintain control over Muslim countries and communities. Reports such as RAND's explicitly state that the US and its allies will be able to suppress Islamic dissent, as well also control the massive human and mineral resources of the Muslim and developing world.

The revolutionary masses of West-Asia are calling for concerted regional efforts to terminate Western hegemony in the region, and for it to take control of its own destiny. They want an end to the centuries-old humiliation, insults, and indignities suffered at the hands of the Western powers and their agent Israel. They believe Resistance to oppression is the road to

liberation and regaining our freedom, honour and dignity.

The historical revolutionary course unfolding in the Arab-Muslim world has struck terror in the hearts of the imperialist powers and their local agents - the Arab dictators and many hereditary rulers. They are conspiring to shape the process to serve their interests and to nullify the revolutionary goals of the people. One of the strategies used by them is to divide the people by politicising sectarian differences and instigating sectarian conflicts.

The Sunni-Shia conflict in Iraq was instigated by the United States occupation authority in order to weaken the resistance to the occupation. The Saudi Arabian and the Bahraini governments are trying to create disunity among the Bahrainis by labelling and demonising the democratic forces as Shia extremists. In Lebanon, Shia-Sunni conflict is being promoted by the Future Movement led by Saad Hariri with the support of the US and Saudi Arabia.

Exploiting Sunni-Shia differences, the U.S administration supports terrorist groups like the Sunni Jundallah in Pakistan to destabilise Iran in order to bring about regime change. Saudi Arabia and some Gulf states are funding some extremist clerics and groups who preach hatred towards Shias and Iran. Likewise, Washington and London have funded and supported elements within Shia communities in the West and elsewhere to foment anti-Sunni feeling and undermine the revolutionary capital that resides in a united Muslim ummah working at the local and global levels. As a result, Muslims in Pakistan are killing one another – even inside mosques – because of sectarian differences. Even in Malaysia where this problem has little precedence, some government sponsored religious officials influenced by Saudi alims, are creating disunity and tension in the Muslim community. Civil society organisations need to address this problem urgently and develop a plan to confront it. NGOs, Islamic political parties and progressive Islamic governments must cooperate to expose the imperialist conspiracy to sow discord in our ranks and work to strengthen our solidarity. It is with this in mind that this Roundtable Meeting was organised.

Universal Justice Network

# My internship experience at the Islamic Human Rights Commission

IHRC appealed to me as a progressive organisation, in tune with the context of today's socio-political climate but with its roots firmly established on the divine and therefore perfect principles of human rights in Islam. I joined because I felt that IHRC is the type of movement in which young, educated, active and socially responsible brothers and sisters can get together to exchange ideas, be a force for change and a voice for the voiceless. I hoped it would provide the platform which constructively directs the energies of the Muslim youth to bring about positive change to a world bleeding from injustice, exploitation and greed. I

spent 6 months working with IHRC and Alhumdullillah my expectations were matched.

As a Zambian Asian who lacked exposure and coming to the UK to study, the most precious experience working with IHRC was being able to contemplate the diversity of our beloved Ummah. My exposure working with brothers and sisters with such varying backgrounds, race, culture, nationalities, all under the name of Islam and our cherished values in itself put me in awe of the power of our faith. It reinforced that indisputable truth; we are all bound by the primordial common demoniator of all being creations of the Al Mighty, subject to His authority

alone, and that's the true essence of humanity. From that understanding it was easy to place into context the struggles of our fellow human beings around the world and our duty as Muslims to address the injustices that cause them.

I urge anyone who shares these ideas to become part of IHRC. The experience will not only allow someone to make a meaningful contribution to the promotion of human rights but Inshallah also help that individual strengthen his faith and understand the importance of consolidating the Ummah.

By Suleman Ismail  
Limbada



# PREVENT: NEW Government, SAME Agenda

**T**he British government's continuing efforts to mould the religion of Islam to their whims, desires and political objectives have continued apace since last Ramadan. Despite the entire strategy entitled 'Prevent' being criticised and condemned by almost all interested parties, both the Labour government in the past and the current Coalition government have insisted on implementing their plan to secularise and depoliticise the religion of Islam in a social engineering project which begun several years ago.

IHRC has been at the forefront of raising awareness of these plots and has engaged directly with the government in addressing its concerns at the alarming developments. In September 2009, in response to a government consultation as part of its Review of the Prevent strategy, IHRC submitted a lengthy and detailed briefing in which it highlighted many flaws and warned of failure if they were left unaddressed. These included:

- The underlying premise of the strategy that all Muslims are potential terrorists;
- The unhelpful conflation of issues of community cohesion and community service delivery with issues of intelligence gathering and counter-terrorism;
- The failure to sufficiently engage with the primary motivations behind the actions of terrorists – an unjust, oppressive foreign policy;
- The failure to define loaded terms such as "violent extremism", "extremism" and "radicalisation";
- The refusal to recognise the real and present danger from Far Right groups;
- The Government's creation, promotion and patronage of unrepresentative Muslim groups in their cynical experiment in social engineering.

Essentially, in its efforts to "stop people becoming terrorists", the Government has effectively criminalised all forms of political opinion, expression and involvement by Muslims. This has manifested itself in a McCarthyite spying culture being implemented in councils, university campuses and even primary schools, as part of the mainstreaming of Prevent.

In response to the consultation, the Review found that the previous Prevent programme "confused the delivery of government policy to promote integration with government policy to prevent terrorism. It failed to tackle the extremist ideology at the heart of the threat we face, and in trying to reach those at risk of radicalisation, funding sometimes even reached the very extremist organisations that Prevent should have been confronting."

The new Prevent strategy launched in June 2011 unfortunately failed to address many of the concerns expressed by IHRC and others. Although it now acknowledges the need to tackle Far Right extremism, the Government has stated that the focus must be on those forms of terrorism that pose the greatest risk to our national security which they claim comes from Al Qa'ida



EDL intimidating and harassing Palestinian activists.

and its affiliates and like-minded groups. Automatically, we see that the Government is completely out of touch with its Muslim citizens who face harassment, intimidation, abuse and extreme violence from Far Right groups such as the EDL on a daily basis, with mosques being vandalized and fire-bombed, individuals being brutally assaulted and families terrorized by large and rowdy mobs of EDL members marching in areas containing Muslim populations. For Britain's two million Muslims, it is this daily terrorization that is the greatest threat to their security.

Furthermore, the new Prevent strategy falls into the old trap of focussing on ideology rather than actions and effectively creating 'thought crime' with the most devastating consequences. It insists on tackling non-violent extremism where it creates an environment conducive to terrorism and popularises ideas that are espoused by terrorist groups. Its repeated mention of 'Qa'ida, its affiliates and like-minded groups' is particularly problematic due to the failure to define a "like-minded group". Most Muslims who condemn the actions of al-Qa'ida, nevertheless share their ideological motivation and the underlying causes behind their actions such as the liberation of Muslim lands from occupying forces, the removal of tyrannical regimes and the unification of the Muslim world under Islamic rule. Rather than addressing these grievances as a motivating force for "extremism, the new Prevent strategy," criminalises believing in such ideas.

The new Prevent strategy has now defined certain terminology, the new definitions themselves being very problematic and latitudinous. 'Extremism' for example is defined as "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces,

whether in this country or overseas". 'Radicalisation' is defined as "the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism."

The new Prevent strategy also further criminalises almost all modes of Muslim behaviour focussing on Muslim schools, madrassahs, prisons, universities, mosques, charities, women, etc. It continues to adopt a strategy of utilizing public sector workers such as teachers, council leaders, and health care professionals to identify "extremists" without any clear indicators, thereby leading to a scenario in which individuals can be discriminated against for life due to the individual bias and prejudice of a single person.

In substance, there is very little difference in the new Prevent strategy. IHRC believes that at a time of cuts, it would be a far better use of public money for the government to focus on fighting actual crime rather than policing political belief and expression.

By Fahad Ansari

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



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Commission Trust or pay by credit or debit card by filling in your details below and send it with the completed form below. UK tax payers are able to utilise Gift Aid when donating to Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust, by ticking the relevant box(es) below. This means forevery £1 you donate IHRCT will be able to

reclaim a further 28p. You can also call the office and donate with your credit or debit card on 020 8904 4222 (if you are outside the UK please call +44 20 8904 4222. Please make sure you state that you want it to be a GIFT AID donation. **May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts. Ameen.**

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# IHRC merchandise and campaign material



There are many ways you can help IHRC - one of them is to buy our publications and merchandise.

The items listed below are only some of our products. For a full range, see:

**www.ihrc.org.uk**

You can also order free leaflets and campaign materials (a small charge is made for postage).

## REPORTS

Below are some a list of our most recent reports. More details on them are available on-line. Most IHRC reports are available to download from our website without charge. The prices are for bound hard copy versions, and include postage and packing.

❑ **Police, Protest and Conflict: A Report into the Policing of the Gaza Demonstrations 2008-09.** This report is an examination of how the British police dealt with protests in London against Israel's war in Gaza. 96pp. Price: £7.00.

❑ **Towards a New Liberation Theology: Reflections on Palestine** Compilation of paper presented at a IHRC conference on the same subject. Pub: March 2009. £5.

❑ **Europe's Shame: Anti-Muslim Hatred and the Roma of Bulgaria** Based on the report submitted to UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (see p. 6 above). Pub: 31 July 2009. £7.

❑ **Aftermath: Gaza in the Days After the 22 Day War.** (7 May 2009) A diary account of two lawyers who visited Gaza to collect testimony from victims of the war. Cost £6

❑ **For Liberty?** (12 February 2009) The Impact of the French Ban on the Islamic Headscarf and other Religious Symbols in Schools. £6

❑ **British Anti-Terrorism: A Modern Day Witch-hunt** (Revised July 2006) A must read for all those concerned with the British government's war on terror and its implications for its Muslim community. £6.

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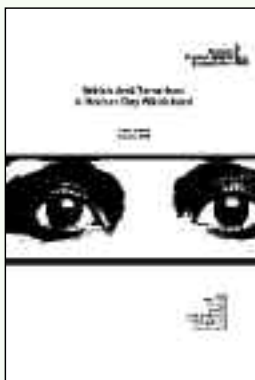
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❑ **Against Zionism: Jewish Perspectives** (2008). Papers presented at an IHRC conference, 2006. £5.

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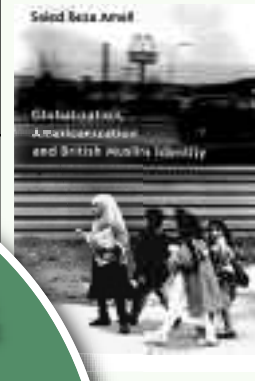
❑ **'Know Your Rights' Leaflet.** A brief guide for people affected by anti-terrorist laws: your rights if contacted by MI5, Special Branch or other parts of the security apparatus in the UK or if you are arrested or your premises are searched. Handy credit card size. 50.

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❑ **VIDEO: Human Rights, Justice and Muslims in the wake of September 11, 2001.** Seminar from October 2001. £8. Price includes postage and packing.

❑ **DVD Set: Absent Justice.** Seven DVDs in the set, recording the Israeli operation "Defensive Shield". A Vision for Art Production. £19.95. PG. Price includes postage and packing.

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❑ **Globalization, Americanization and British Muslim Identity** by Dr Saied Raza Ameli. 340 pages, (2002). This book, by one of IHRC's founders, looks at the development of British Muslim identity and the challenges to it from the globalization of Hollywood culture. £17.00.

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card which lists  
companies and  
products to avoid.

**020 8904 4222  
or email info@ihrc.org**



Charity Reg. No. 1105056

**THINK Orphans!**  
**Think Sponsorship**

Driven by the fast pace of modern life, at times we all need to  
remind ourselves to stop and look at where we are heading  
and see if we are focused on the things that really matter.  
Moreover, we need to remind ourselves of the abundance of  
Allah's (s.w.t.) gifts and also remember those who are less  
fortunate than ourselves.

This is an appeal and indeed an invitation for you to share  
some of your gifts with needy orphans in the developing world  
through the MH Orphan Sponsorship Scheme.

As a charity MH aims to reach the neediest people all over the  
world and we hope you will agree that impoverished orphans  
are certainly most deserving of our help.



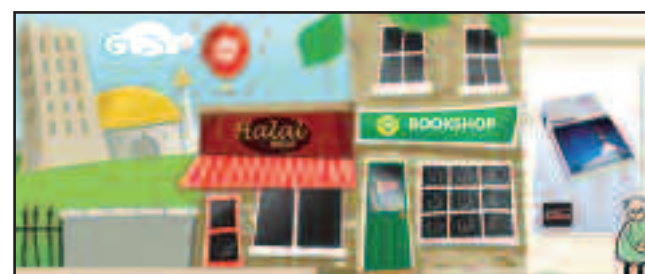
**Muslim Hands**



The Muslim Hands  
Orphan Sponsorship  
Scheme runs in 22 of the  
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This Ramadan, we have  
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IHRC has grown and  
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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 form on page 14.  
Otherwise please fill in the  
appropriate form on this page.

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.**

**Islamic  
Human Rights  
Commission**



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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Contacting you by e-mail or fax may save IHRC  
money. If you would prefer not to be contacted this  
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Please state amount in words \_\_\_\_\_

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Upon receipt of this order and subsequently the  
same amount on this first day of each month until  
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**Please return this form to us at:**  
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Islamic Human Rights Commission  
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