The Fourth Assembly

of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies

Global Peace and the Fear of Islam:

Roadblocks on the road to Radicalism

December 11–13, 2017

St. Regis Abu Dhabi Hotel

Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.

Welcome

As-Salaamu Alaykum

May Peace and Mercy of God be Upon You.

Esteemed and Honoured Guests,

We warmly welcome you to Abu Dhabi, UAE and look forward to your participation over the coming days at the Fourth Assembly of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, held between December 11-13 at the St. Regis Abu Dhabi Hotel, Abu Dhabi.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for joining us and appreciate your wonderful assistance and time in helping us to finalize your schedule to be with us. This booklet will provide you with further information of the draft agenda, concept note and other important logistical information that will help you during your stay. We hope you find this useful.

The President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, H.E. Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah is looking forward to hosting you in Abu Dhabi for this vital assembly and wishes you a safe journey in joining us here in Abu Dhabi.

His consistent message for all participants is *'our humble aims at the Forum, is to simply to call for peace and urge others to do the same, for we believe that both religious and rational points of view indicate that peace is our ultimate objective. We pray together in solidiarity that this is the beginning of a long, but worthy walk to peace. May we all facilitate peace and establish common ground, hand in hand to shorten the path to peace and pray for a future where peace flourishes through the conviction of our hearts'*

Sincerely Yours,

Zeshan Zafar

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About Us

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

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

The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies is the culmination of the H.E.. Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah's work, as one of the few living scholars to have mastered all four Sunni Madhabs (schools of jurisprudence). This allows him to comBine the study of the scriptural sources of Quran and Hadith, the various schools' approaches to Usul al-Fiqh (the theoretical foundations of jurisprudence), and Maqasid al-Shariah (the purposes of Islamic law). This breadth of study has allowed the Shaykh to develop a universal framework in which Islamic jurisprudence can be adapted to local contexts while maintaining its essential principles and purposes, and ensuring its continued relevance in the lives of an increasingly diverse global Muslim population.

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

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

Biography of H.E. Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah
President of the Forum for Peace, Abu Dhabi, UAE

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

Born in eastern Mauritania in 1935, the Shaykh grew up in a family known for its grasp of the Mauritanian classical curriculum. His father, Cheikhna Mahfudh Bin Bayyah was regarded as one of the great West African scholars of his time. From an early age, the Shaykh demonstrated his exceptional memory and understanding of the Mauritanian texts.

Under his father's tutelage, he developed an advanced understanding of Arabic grammar and rhetoric, and knowledge of pre-Islamic Arab poetry. He also developed an advanced understanding of the Quranic sciences: legal theory, syntax, language, orthography and the ten forms of Quranic recitation. He specialised in the Maliki school of jurisprudence, and was qualified to give authoritative legal opinions (fatwas).

In his early 20s, he was selected as part of a group of scholars to go to Tunisia for training in modern legal systems, which were to be introduced to Mauritania. He graduated at the top of his group, and on his return to Mauritania was appointed a judge, rising to become Minister of Justice, Minister of Islamic Affairs, and eventually Vice President.

When some government officials criticised his lack of fluency in French, he taught himself the language by listening to French radio with a dictionary in hand. He later surprised his critics by addressing a ministerial meeting in the language. His mastery of French has allowed him to study European thought and the history of ideas. He is rare among contemporary Muslim scholars for his knowledge of the work of Western philosophers and social theorists.

In 1978, his government was overthrown in a coup, and he was imprisoned for some months. On his release, due to ill-health, he left politics to devote his time to study and teaching, joining the faculty of King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. Here, he developed his expertise in all four major schools of jurisprudence. This allows

him to comBine the study of the scriptural sources of Quran and Hadith, the various schools' approaches to Usul al-Fiqh (the theoretical foundations of jurisprudence), and Maqasid al-Shariah (the purposes of Islamic law). This breadth of study has allowed the Shaykh to develop a universal framework in which Islamic jurisprudence can be adapted to local contexts while maintaining its essential principles and purposes, and ensuring its continued relevance in the lives of an increasingly diverse global Muslim population.

The Shaykh has developed theories of Islamic jurisprudence in secular or non-Muslim societies, called the Jurisprudence of Minorities (fiqh al-aqalliyyat). He is also an outspoken critic of terrorism, authoring several articles and books exploring Islamic responses to the issue. He has applied this work practically, not least in the successful efforts to secure the release of French war correspondent Florence Aubenas, and her translator Hussein Hanun, in Iraq in 2005.

Over the past 25 years, the Shaykh has taught students who have become some of the most prominent scholars in the Middle East and North Africa. In the late 1990s, he also started to visit the West, particularly teaching British and American students, and gaining a following against prominent Western Muslim leaders. He has written several books and hundreds of articles and essays, mostly in Arabic, which are used by scholars around the world.

The Shaykh's work has not been focused on scholarship for its own sake, but on applying it to address some of the most pressing issues facing global Islam. In 2008, he became the founding President of the Global Centre for Renewal and Guidance, a London-based think tank that applies scholarship to strategic solutions to pressing intellectual and spiritual issues facing global Islam. This reflects the Shaykhs belief that ideas can only be defeated by ideas, and that Islamist extremism must be answered by sound reasoning drawn from orthodox, accepted sources of Islamic jurisprudence.

This approach was applied in Mardin, Turkey, in 2010, when his organization convened a conference to examine a fatwa issued by the 14th century scholar Ibn Taymiyyah. His 'Mardin Fatwa' is widely used by jihadi groups to justify attacks on both non-Muslims and Muslims who do not follow their understanding of Islam. The 2010 Mardin Conference revealed that a transcription error had been introduced in a 1909 edition of Ibn Taymiyyah's fatwa, turning the verb "to treat" into the verb "to fight", and that jihadi groups were relying on the incorrect version. Under the Shaykh's leadership, the conference published a report ("Challenging the al-Qaida Narrative: The New Mardin Declaration") attacking the jihadi understanding of the fatwa. Three separate spokesmen of al-Qaida responded to this threat, attacking Shaykh Abd'Allah Bin Bayyah by name.

In 2014, the Shaykh established the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies (FPP) in Abu Dhabi, under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed, the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates. The vision of the FPP was to address the crises facing global Islam from a framework of Islamic tradition and legal theory, applied to local contexts. Over 1,000 of the world's leading Islamic scholars from a variety of traditions, as well as

academics and thought leaders, attended the FPP's launch. The FPP is the first global gathering of scholars designed to provide a response to extremism, sectarianism and terrorism.

Since the 2014 Forum, the Shaykh has travelled widely to advance its work, in North Africa, the Middle East, Far East and the West. This included a conference with the African Union on tackling the religious conflict in the Central African Republic, and the release of the Chibok girls by the Nigerian jihadi group Boko Haram. He has led Imam training initiatives in the US, UK and Europe, and spoken widely on the issue of global peace, including at the World Economic Forum in 2015 and 2017, and at the UN Countering Violent Extremism Summit in 2015. In 2014, the Shaykh's work and that of the FPP were referenced by President Barack Obama at the UN General Assembly.

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

The Shaykh has received multiple awards recognizing his work. In 2015 he was the recipient of the Religious Freedom Award at the inaugural Newseum Free Expression Awards and serves in the leadership of many organizations seeking peace, including as one of four Executive Co-Presidents of Religions for Peace, the largest interfaith organization in the world. He has authored a number of notable books with some available in the English language, such as The Culture of Terrorism published in 2009.

Concept Note

Global Peace and the Fear of Islam: Roadblocks on the road to Radicalism

In the Name of Allah, the All Merciful, the Most Merciful

The heinous acts of terror perpetrated in the name of Islam, particularly those carried out since 9/11, have become a matter of considerable debate in both the Islamic world and the West. Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of Muslims disassociate their religion from these acts of terror and are innocent of any involvement in them, and even though the stance and statements of most politicians, thinkers and eminent religious figures in the West are fair in relation to Islam and Muslims, nevertheless, the idea that there is an inextricable link between terrorism, killing, and the teachings of Islam and its law, has taken hold and entered into the public consciousness in Western societies. Indeed, there is an increasingly popular perception that the social values of Islam are incompatible with the Western way of life and therefore make it impossible for Muslims to integrate into society and coexist peacefully with non-Muslims; many intellectuals, strategic experts, political activists, media networks and artists are basing their views on that premise.

This position, however, is very dangerous because it drags both sides down into a vicious circle. The more the circle of people in Western societies who fear Muslims and subscribe to Islamophobic views grows, the greater the strain on international relations and the relationship with their own Muslim minorities. This in turn persuades their governments to pursue foreign and domestic policies which weaken the levels of trust and confidence between the two sides, aiding anti-Western rhetoric and forming a basis for increased religious segregation. This anti-Western sentiment is further fuelled by the memory of the West's colonial legacy in the region.

It has become increasingly clear that one of the best guarantees for success at the ballot box in the Western world- particularly in countries in which the Muslim community is large enough to have made its presence felt- is to adopt a hostile attitude towards Muslims and their values and incite hatred against their religion. Anti-Islamic rhetoric is also sometimes a very profitable enterprise. Despite the fact that Muslims in the West live in countries in which discrimination on the basis of race or religion is theoretically illegal and enshrined in law, with equality and the presumption of innocence being rights shared by all who enjoy citizenship, nevertheless, they feel compelled to publicly defend their religion and distance themselves and their communities from the accusations that they encourage extremism, violence and terrorism whenever such acts occur. It is as if the whole Muslim community is held accountable for the acts of a criminal and misguided fringe group.

Does Islam as a religion pose an actual threat to peace in Western societies? Does it really threaten the relationship between Muslims and the international community at large? Is it logically and morally justified to consider the acts of a few fringe criminal groups that enjoy no legitimacy whatsoever, to be representative of more than a billion Muslims worldwide? Do not Muslims consider 'Peace-Giver' to be one of God's beautiful names? Do they not greet

one another daily with the greeting of peace? Is their faith unshaken by the fact that their Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, came as a mercy to all the worlds?

The Forum for Promoting Peace has made it one of its priorities to help break this vicious circle of mutual fear, suspicion and mistrust which, in turn, foster feelings of hatred, racism and exclusion. This further feeds the flames of many potential forms of conflict and sedition that threaten social and international peace. It is for this reason that the Forum has chosen to devote its fourth yearly assembly (its 2017 Forum) to the topic of 'Global Peace and the Fear of Islam: Roadblocks on the road to Radicalism.'

Scholars, thinkers, researchers, political activists, media professionals and other concerned parties will, by the will of God, meet in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, from the 11th to the 13th of December 2017 to discuss this topic. The conference will be divided into the following themes:

Theme 1: Religion, Identity and Global Peace

This theme will comprise one topic:

1) The International & Regional Climate for Global Peace

This theme seeks to highlight and critically assess the factors which could potentially pose a threat to regional or global peace, regardless of whether those factors are (a) due to political, economic and sociological influences, or (b) are attributable to ideological, cultural and doctrinal views.

Within the framework of a global system built on the precarious 'balance of terror', among the key factors that fall into the first category (a), and perhaps the most significant threat to world peace, is weapons of mass destruction, for the safeguards that are in place to prevent their use are insufficient and some countries refuse to submit themselves to international monitoring and regulation. Other factors include regional disputes over sovereignty, natural resources and water, demands for secession, organised crime, famine and uncontrolled mass migration. And, of course, we must not forget the dangers of environmental pollution on a global scale.

As for factors within the second category (b), they include ideologies that suggest a 'clash of civilisations' is inevitable, or ones that entertain an apocalyptic view of the world. Other factors include 'paroxysmal' identities, racist tendencies, and religious extremism, irrespective of its origin. All these things pose a threat to social and global peace, for they set into motion a process which starts with the marginalisation and exclusion of ethnic and religious minorities, and moves on to religious and ethnic cleansing and international terrorism. This inevitably leads to the launching of pre-emptive wars on potential enemies, simply because they have different values, a different way of life and view the world differently.

Theme 2: Islam and the World: An Islamic Vision for Global Peace

The title of the main topic addressed by this theme is 'An Islamic Vision for Global Peace'. After analysing all the material and sociological dimensions of the regional and international climates for peace, and critically assessing the popular portrayal of Muslims and their religion as being the primary source of terror and a significant threat, it becomes necessary for the Forum for Promoting Peace to address the nature of Islam's contribution to world peace through its objectives, legal rulings and its historical precedent. Each annual assembly represents a fresh opportunity for the Forum to bring to the fore and clarify core concepts of Islam, given the terrible results that have ensued from a misinterpretation of those concepts by separating them from the lofty values of Islam, the objectives of Islamic law, the general and specific historical contexts for the revelation of Islamic legal rulings, and how they pertained to the ever-changing reality on the ground. It is worth noting that such a 'malady of contextomy' affects both groups in equal measure on opposite sides of the spectrum, namely, those who accuse Islam of being a religion of violence and killing, and those who practice violence and killing in its name!

The main topic of this theme will cover the following three workshops:

a)   From Abode to Pact

The concept of 'abode' as understood by jurists of the past (dividing the world into the Abode of Islam and the Abode of Conflict, and in the opinion of some, a third category of Abode of Covenant), might suggest that the confidence some have that Islam is capable of coexisting peacefully with the rest of the world is misplaced. This impression might be further reinforced by the fact that extremist movements and terrorist entities take advantage of this perceived division to justify their statements and acts. But this impression can be shown to be false by asking just one fundamental question: Was it on the basis of firm textual evidence that the jurists came up with this bilateral division of the world, or was it simply the only functioning theoretical model they could come up with in the world in which they lived, to ensure that the religious and social affairs of the Muslims would continue to be protected under Islamic law? This one overriding question gives rise to many sub-questions: Was not the basis for international interaction at the time one of a constant struggle for influence? Were not wars of expansion the norm except in those very rare cases where certain countries signed partial or complete treaties and covenants with one other? Was it not one of the defining features of the time that religious authorities interfered in the affairs of temporal authorities? Were the societies of the time not set apart from each other on the basis of their religious beliefs, and did that not then mean that the lives and wellbeing of Muslims were threatened whenever they stepped outside their 'abode', let alone tried to practice the rites of their religion there? Did not Islamic legal theory, even in those trying times, recognise the fact that there were certain lands that could not easily be categorised in this Binary or tertiary way? And did it not define those lands as 'Composite Abodes' when they were not governed by Sharia law but it was still possible for Muslims to live there and practice the rites of their religion in peace and

safety[1]? And if security of one's person and freedom to practice one's religion are indeed the defining factors in dividing the world, then is it not the basic position of Muslims – as stated in the legal texts of Islam and supported by history's testimony – that the land is the land of God and the slaves are the slaves of God, and Muslims are free to live wherever they may please[2]?

And, moving from the past to the present, should not this way of dividing the world that we have inherited from our legal tradition of the past be consigned to history? For the reality on the ground has moved past it and there is no longer any geographical area which can be said to be the land of a particular religion. Indeed, freedom of religion has today become a right that is protected by both national constitutions and international covenants and agreements.

b) Jihad and Just War

The concept of jihad is one which is deeply confusing for a large section of the general populace in the West, and completely misunderstood by many of those who are otherwise well-educated as well as by much of the media. Most of them consider jihad to be synonymous with 'holy war', thereby making it into something that in their minds poses a threat to global peace. But, amongst Muslims, the word jihad has a far broader meaning than simply fighting. For, in their religion, the word jihad is used to refer to many different inward and outward forms of worship. The fact that jurists only use the word in their books to refer to fighting is immaterial, since the spiritual and moral dimensions of legal concepts lie outside of their bailiwick.

In discussing this matter, it is imperative to differentiate between the two types of military jihad dealt with in Islamic legal tradition. The first is 'defensive jihad' which includes all the various different ways of repelling armed aggression, deterring neighbouring states from breaking peace treaties, and securing one's borders. This type of jihad is the right of every nation, even according to the standards of modern international conventions. The second type of jihad is known in the Islamic legal tradition as 'pre-emptive jihad', and is the only set of circumstances, according to some jurists, under which it is permitted to fight war for the purpose of calling people to the religion. It is this type of jihad that Westerners look at through the lens of the holy wars or crusades that were a significant part of their own history.

This latter type of jihad is inextricably linked to certain historical conditions that no longer exist in this day and age, for, in the past, there were no international conventions nor any borders except for those established by force of arms or by reason of geographical remoteness. And, as a result, it was almost impossible for the Muslims to safeguard their kingdoms and abodes without resorting to war. Of the expeditionary delegations sent out by the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, to the tribes of Arabia, were not at least forty of them unarmed, while

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[1] This topic was the starting point for the conference entitled, 'Mardin, the Land of Peace'. This conference was held in the city of Mardin in Turkey in March 2010 and was hosted by the eminent scholar, Shaykh Abdullah Bin Bayyah.

[2] In the hadith transmitted by Imam Ahmed in his Musnad, the wording is, 'The land is the land of God and the slaves are the slaves of God. Wherever you find good, establish yourself there.'

there were only seven occasions upon which he was forced to engage in armed conflict? If there was an opportunity to call people to the religion in a peaceful manner, did he not take it? Why were there so many regions and areas excluded from the conquests during the time of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Rightly-guided Caliphs when the Muslims had the necessary military force and spiritual resolve to conquer them all? Would we be going too far if we were to say that all forms of war endorsed by Sharia law fall within the definition of a 'just war', even by the standards of modern ethics and contemporary politics?

Given all that has been said here, is it acceptable, in this day and age, for a religious leader, or even an intellectual, to call for pre-emptive jihad, especially in a world whose borders and barriers have been rendered almost completely irrelevant by ideas and values, a world in which there is a United Nations which regulates inter-state relations and criminalises trans-state aggression with the aim of bringing about universal global peace? And, if it is the case that the only entity that has the legal right to declare any type of armed jihad is the State, because of the fact that it is the only body in a society qualified to weigh up benefit and harm, then is it not completely irrational for it to declare war on a people in order to bring them into the religion in an age where there is mass proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction? Does such an act not go against the Qur'anic principle of 'No compulsion in religion' (Qur'an 2:256)? Is it not against the laws of Islam which are founded upon the message of peace and seek only what is in the best interests of the human race?

c) Peace as an Objective of Islamic Law

This workshop takes us out of the zone of concepts and legal rulings and into the zone of objectives of the law, whereby all the individual details cohere in such a way that they complement one another and go beyond the 'malady of contextomy' to which reference was made earlier in the introduction to this theme. This workshop is aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

Is not the establishment of a sustainable peace an essential prerequisite for inhabiting the earth, and is not that one of the main objectives of the human race? Is it not peace that guarantees the protection of the necessary objectives of Islamic law, which in turn protect the different levels of common good and public interest? Are these objectives not undermined whenever peace is undermined? For, how can a person truly practice the rites of his religion and keep himself, his family and his and their reputations and possessions safe in a situation in which there is no peace and no security? Are these principles and objectives not exactly what is spoken of in the legal texts of the religion? Does not the conduct of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and the path taken by the Companions, may God be pleased with them, and the Right-acting Generations who followed in their footsteps bear witness to this? And if this is indeed the case – and it is – then is not giving priority to peace over all other interests and considerations something that is obligatory in the eyes of the law, even before we take into account what we can learn from the historical experience and accumulated wisdom of the human race?

Theme 3: Islam and the Wider World: Ways to Rapprochement and Solidarity

The title of the main topic of this theme is 'Islam and the Wider World: Ways to Rapprochement and Solidarity' in order to think of the ways in which it might be possible for Muslims to change their relationship with the rest of the world, and in particular the West. That is, moving from one which is not only built on mutual misunderstanding, negative stereotypes, mistrust, and even in some cases, on pure hatred, to one which is built on mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence. If such a thing were to happen, that would undoubtedly have a positive effect on international relations and establishing peace within multicultural societies.

Aspiring to make this step does not mean that the many barriers, difficulties and stumbling blocks are forgotten. But the presence of such barriers does mean that forming a relationship of this type requires us to pull out all the stops and mobilise all the forces at our disposal. We are totally convinced of the need for the brightest and wisest minds from both sides to expend all their efforts to construct defences of peace in the minds of men, for we are living in an age when communication between humans has never been easier, and many societies long for just political and economic governance. We are living in an age where many civil society organisations (CSOs) are calling out to each other to provide relief to those in need, show solidarity with those of different faiths and races, and counter racism and hate speech. 'If it were not for God's driving some people back by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted. But God shows favour to all the worlds.' (Qur'an 2:251)

Out of the main topic of this theme, the following workshops emerge:

a) From Jihad of Fighting to Jihad of Reaching Out

Religions teach us that the final fate of a human being depends upon the positions he holds, the choices he makes, and the steps he takes. This is also the lesson of human history, for mankind has oft suffered the ravages of war and conflict and rarely experienced the joys of peace and prosperity, except on those few occasions when wisdom held sway and community leaders placed greater emphasis on peaceful coexistence. In the last century, after the two world wars finally came to an end, mankind achieved something truly historic by bringing together all the nations of the world into a single organisation, the United Nations, to manage and regulate the relations between them, protect their sovereignty and citizenry from trans-state aggression and be a platform for inter-state disputes to be resolved. But are there not more great things that humanity can achieve? Can humanity consolidate the gains that it has already made and develop them still further? Can humanity make use of them in the arenas of international relations, cultural relations and societal relations? If the answer to these questions is yes, then how do we go about moving those relations out of circles of conflict and into the zone of rapprochement and understanding? And how can we put out the fires of conflict which are fuelled by the continued existence of ignorance and greed? And how can we rid ourselves of that ignorance and greed if we do not make efforts to learn the truth about one another and put aside our grudges, and if we do not want the best for all parties and seek to protect everyone's interests? If mutual ignorance of the other side's true nature and world view are what incites conflict, then, surely, we must do

what is necessary to get to know one another better, by acknowledging each other's right to a different opinion, overcoming our differences through dialogue, and turning our critical gaze upon ourselves? And what of the shared historical memory that is normally reduced to wars alone? Can we maintain our efforts to get to know one another and find solidarity, when the right to freedom of expression is not checked by responsibility on the ground for the consequences of what is said, such as in the case of blasphemy? What is it that is expected from the Islamic discourse in return? For are there not more and more values in Muslim societies that do not reflect the humanity and universality of Islam? Is it not required of the Islamic legal tradition, at this critical juncture in the history of the Muslim people and the history of international relations, that it be the legal tradition of peace par excellence?

b) Bridges of Rapprochement and Circles of Solidarity

Efforts to get to know one another and find solidarity cannot be founded in a vacuum, but must instead be based on humanity's capacity to cultivate and expand those things he has in common with others, especially those that are the most symbolically and functionally significant, on a number of different levels:

On a religious level, there is a great deal of common ground, especially amongst those who are part of the Abrahamic family of faiths. But, even in general, is it not the very essence of all religions in practice to purify the self in order to increase in moral virtue, love of creation, good conduct, and cooperation in furtherance of the common good? Is it not in the best interests of all followers of religion to set aside their usual modus operandi for dealing with those of other faiths (i.e. greeting them with criticism), and instead interact with them in a way that is conducive to peaceful coexistence in this world? Would it not be of greater benefit to humanity for the various religions to work together in the service of the values of goodness, love and solidarity? Would it not be of more benefit for us to forego making judgements on creeds and beliefs and leave it to God, for it is He who will judge between His slaves in the Hereafter regarding everything about which they differed?

On a human level, there is even more common ground, with more shared moral and ethical values and mutual sociological needs than can ever be counted. On a political level and in terms of rights, the principle of citizenship is, in this age, considered to be the best framework available for coexistence, for it establishes the fact that every member of a society has the same rights and duties regardless of religion or race. Has not past experience shown that this principle, whenever it is based on the right to differ, spares societies from the affliction of social breakdown? Should not the choices of those countries who have committed themselves to respecting and even encouraging religious and cultural pluralism in harmony with their constitutions, be deemed successful and worthy of consideration?

Other areas of commonality that peoples can cultivate and develop are the diverse forms of cultural exchange which enrich the human personality in terms of its perception of the world, its life experiences and its values. This form of exchange only slackens off in times of great crisis.

One thing that should not be forgotten here is that it was one of these forms of exchange that was a critical factor in the nations of the past getting to know one another and agreeing to keep the peace. That form of exchange was trade and commerce. But, today, especially given that the need for this type of exchange has developed and grown to unprecedented levels, the question must be asked: Do the rules, regulations and mechanisms which govern this form of exchange in our time balance the values of rapprochement with the needs and interests of those involved in this exchange? Is it not the case that these rules themselves are one of the main causes for the strain on relations rather than being a part of the solution? Is there not a need to revise them, based on the values of justice and fairness?

c) Looking Forward to a Future of Rapprochement and Solidarity in the Global Arena

If the world today is teetering on the edge of a volcano made up of the dangers and disasters people have wrought by their own hands, then rapprochement between religions and cultures would help reduce the differences between the followers of those religions and cultures, and pave the way for a reconciliation that will revitalise hopes in man's capacity to make use of his God-given intellect, choice and moral core to create a better tomorrow.

Can the religions of the world take up this challenge? And can the family of Abrahamic Faiths, in particular, reconcile with each other and work together hand-in-hand? And, by doing so, make a significant contribution to promoting the spirit of peace throughout the world, facilitating access to the path of justice and good, and providing redress for grievances and injustices?

Are the world's cultures strong enough to reconcile their own uniqueness with what they have in common with everyone else, such as the belief in the value and dignity of man and the acknowledgement that nations need each other and no nation is completely self-sufficient? For, no matter how advanced a nation becomes and how much knowhow it acquires, will it not always lack for things and require external support?

Is not the direction taken by history one of dissolving the cultural barriers that exist between people by virtue of the strength of the movement towards intercommunication and intermingling in our time? Does not this situation make it necessary for us to work together in the service of global peace, pooling our experiences, skills and resources, so that the future generations can live in societies based on miscegenation and diversity and imbued with the acceptance of difference?

The approach the Forum for Promoting Peace has taken in observing and highlighting the elements of hope means that it is necessary here for us to acknowledge the tremendous efforts that have been made throughout the world to promote peace between religions, cultures and peoples.

So, on a religious level, what are the lessons that can be learnt from the efforts made by foundations, organisations and interfaith dialogue initiatives in the service of peace? And on an intellectual and academic level, what has been achieved by these centres of inter-civilisational dialogue, and centres and chairs of study, to share data and knowledge and provide others with an accurate picture of themselves? And on a sociological level, what are the

prospects of the worldwide network of organisations that has been created for the purpose of human acquaintanceship, cultural exchange, the fair treatment of minorities, facilitating their integration into public life, improving their chances of equal opportunity, and guaranteeing their cultural and political rights? And in the political sphere, what role have state-endorsed pilot schemes played– regardless of whether they are legislative in nature or attitudinal or are simply initiatives– and what role can they hope to play in the future in creating a community-based model that establishes and protects the basic requirements for rapprochement and coexistence?

In the eyes of the Forum for Promoting Peace, the value of these past efforts and experiences lies in the fact that they prove that there is already an awareness in many different parts of the world that it is necessary for an intellectual and social groundwork to be put in place to enable Muslims and non-Muslims to coexist peacefully. This awareness is represented by a select group of people who may come from different religious, cultural and professional backgrounds, and may play different roles in their countries of origin and walk in different strata of society, but are all united by honesty, sincerity and the sense of fairness. They work tirelessly in search of the common good and want the best for all parties and are emboldened by their belief in a common human destiny.

Theme 4: The Fear of Islam: its Causes and Contexts

This theme will comprise two topics:

1) The Fear of Islam: from a Western Perspective
2) The Fear of Islam: from the Perspective of Muslims Living in the West

This theme derives its academic and practical legitimacy from the fact that hate speech could pose a genuine threat to societal and international peace. This is particularly the case in a world that has faced and continues to face great crises that have left a deep and indelible mark on societies, such as the ongoing crisis of identity and the crippling global financial crisis. The two main topics of discussion in this theme afford participants the opportunity to identify from two different angles, the phenomenon of hyper-fear of Islam – what has today come to be known as 'Islamophobia'. These two angles intersect to help answer a whole host of questions aimed at providing a comprehensive and balanced approach to achieving an understanding of this phenomenon: What is meant by 'Islamophobia'? What caused this particular term to be coined? Why is a distinction drawn between 'Islamophobia' historically and in the modern context? What are the historical, cultural, social and political causes of this phenomenon? What responsibility must Muslims themselves take for the magnification of this phenomenon? What are its intellectual and ideological premises? What are the mechanisms by which this message is broadcast (including symbolic, conventional and alternative media)? And what effects does it have and is it likely to have upon the relationship between the West and Islam and Muslims?

The need for an approach such as this is just as much due to the inherent dangers in this phenomenon as it is to its impact on Muslims, for Islamophobia stifles the opportunities for peaceful coexistence, and destroys not only the

social fabric but all sense of man's nobility; it becomes a normal part of his day-to-day existence to seek out the faults in others, demonise them, and blame them for the woes and ills of the country and the world.

In order to deepen research into the phenomenon of 'Islamophobia', this theme will cover the following workshops:

a) Islamophobia and New Islamophobia
b) The Fear of Islam and New Populist Tendencies
c) Islamophobia, the Media and Communication

The Forum for Promoting Peace hopes that its fourth annual assembly, entitled 'Global Peace and the fear of Islam', will be the perfect opportunity for the convergence of a segment of this select group and the cross-fertilisation of their ideas and experiences. This will on the one hand facilitate a scientific and objective analysis of the roots, causes and consequences of the fears and concerns that the Muslims share with the rest of the world, and on the other, foster new theoretical approaches and breakthroughs to help further the efforts of the brightest and wisest in the service of global peace, tolerance, and love for humanity.

'Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in God's sight is the most God-fearing. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware.' (Qur'an 49:13)

Agenda

Day 1 – Dec 11th 2017			
Timing		**Activity Details**	**Room**
From	**To**		
8:00	9:30	Registration	Lobby
10:00	11:45	▪ National anthem (2 min) ▪ Recitation from the Holy Qur'an to Commence the Fourth Assembly of the Forum for Promoting Peace (3 min) **Opning Session & Welcome Remarks:** ▪ Opening Remarks - H.E. Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance, UAE (15 min) ▪ Welcome Remarks - H.E. Shaykh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, UAE (20 min) ▪ Remarks by - H.E. Dr. Mohammad Bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa, Secretary General of Muslim World League, KSA (15 min) ▪ Remarks by - H.E. Dr. Ahmed Toufiq, Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, Morocco (10 min) ▪ Remarks by - Dr. Abbas Shouman, Deputy of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, Egypt (10 min) ▪ Remarks by - H.E. Dr. Minister Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, Minister of Relgious Affairs, Indonesia (10 min) ▪ Remarks by - H.E. Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, Minister for Religious Affairs & Inter-Faith Harmony, Pakistan (10 min) ▪ Remarks by - H.E. Adama Dieng, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide, Senegal (10 min) ▪ Remarks by - H.E. Dr. Mohamed Matar Al-Kaabi, Secretary General of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, UAE (10 min)	Ballroom
12:00	13:00	**Lunch & Rest**	**Terrace**
13:00	14:30	**Theme 1: Religion, Identity and Global Peace** **General Session # 1: The International Climate for Global Peace** **Moderator:** Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, President of Zayed University, UAE ▪ H.E. Nurlan Yermekbayev, Minister of Religious and Civil Society Affaires, Kazakhstan (10 min) ▪ Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Vice President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies and President of Zaytuna College, USA (15 min) ▪ H.E. Adama Dieng, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide, Senegal (15 min) ▪ H.E. David Saperstein, Director Emeritus, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism / Senior Advisor to the URJ for Policy and Strategy , USA (15 min) ▪ Dr. Abdul Aziz Twiajiri, Director Geenral of ISESCO, KSA (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom
14:30	16:00	**Geeral Session # 2: Religion, Identity and Violence** **Moderator:** Abdullah Al Matouq, UN Humanitarian Envoy for Kuwait & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Kuwait ▪ H.E. Abu Bakr Othman Ibrahim, Minister of Guidance & Endowments, Sudan (10 min) ▪ Dr. Saeed Bin Saeed Al-Alawi, Professor of Philosophy, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Dr. Abdullah Al-Sayed Ould Abah, Professor of Philosophy, University of Nouakchott & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Mauritania (15 min) ▪ Dr. Farhad Khosro Khafar, Professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Social Sciences (EHESS) Paris, France (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom

Day 2 – Dec 12th 2017			
Timing		**Activity Details**	**Room**
From	**To**		
9:00	10:30	**Theme 2: Islam and the World** **General Session: An Islamic Vision for Global Peace** **Moderator:** H.E. Prof. Mohamed Mokhtar Gomaa, Minister of Endowments, Egypt ▪ H.E. Ahmed Abadi, Secretary General of the Muhammadiyah Association of Scholars, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Shaykh Mustafa Ceric, Former Grand Mufti of Bosnia & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Bosnia (15 min) ▪ Dr. Radwan Al Sayed, Writer and Thinker, Professor Emiratus, Islamic Studies, Lebanese University & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Lebanon (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom
10:40	12:00	**Theme 3: Islam and the Wider World** **General Session: Ways to Rapprochement and Solidarity** **Moderator:** H.E. Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muaamar, Secretary General, KAICIID, KSA ▪ H.E. Ahmed Daoud, Minister of Islamic Affairs & Endowments, Mauritania (10 min) ▪ H.E. Abdullah Boussouf, Secretary General of the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Dr. William Vendley, Secretary General of Religions for Peace International, USA (15 min) ▪ Dr. Ali Bin Tamim, General Manager of Abu Dhabi Media, UAE (15 min) ▪ Discussion (25 min)	Ballroom
12:00	**13:00**	**Lunch & Rest**	**Terrace**
13:00	14:30	**Theme 4: The Fear of Islam: Causes and Contexts** **General Session: Best Practices for Addressing Islamophobia: Collaboration through Inter-religious partnerships** **Moderator:** Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Director of the Secretariat of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, USA ▪ Dr. Besa Ismail, Vice Dean to Faculty of Islamic Studies, Kosova (10 min) ▪ Dr. Catherine Orsborn, Executive Director of Should to Shoulder, USA (10 min) ▪ H.E. David Saperstein, Director Emeritus, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism / Senior Advisor to the URJ for Policy and Strategy, USA (15 min) ▪ Dr. Imam Qari Asim, Member of the British Government's Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, UK (10 min) ▪ Discussion (35 min) ▪ 'How they believe II: An in-depth look at Muslim thoughts and beliefs, Dr. James Zogby, Zogby Research Services, USA (10 min)	Ballroom
19:00	20:00	**Gala Dinner** **Al Imam al-Hasan bin Ali Peace Award Ceremony** **Presenting the American Peace Caravan: Faith Trust & the Common Good** **Moderator:** Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi, Director of the Secretariat of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, USA ▪ Imam Mohamed Magid, Executive Imam of All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS), USA ▪ Pastor Bob Roberts, Founding & Senior Pastor of NorthWood Church, USA ▪ Rabbi Bruce Lustig, Senior Rabbi at the Washington Hebrew Congregation, USA	Ballroom

Day 3 – Dec 13th 2017			

Timing		Activity Details	Room
From	**To**		

Workshops			

Workshop Theme: The Fear of Islam: Causes & Contexts			
9:00	10:30	**Workshop # 1:** **Fear of Islam today** **Moderator:** Dr. Abdul-Salam Al-Abbadi, Secretary General, International Islamic Fiqh Council, Jordan	▪ Ustadha Khola Hassan, Scholar, Ustadh at Imams Online, & Consultant at the Islamic Shariah Council, UK (15 min) ▪ Dr. Joseph Mosaad, Professor of Modern Arabic & Intellectual History, Colombia University, USA (15 min) ▪ Dr. Nasr Arif, Professor, Zayed University, Egypt (15 min) ▪ Dr. Aisha Al Adawiyah, Founder of Women in Islam Inc & Forum for Peace Trustee, USA (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom A
9:00	10:30	**Workshop # 2:** **Fear of Islam: From a Western perspective** **Moderator:** TBD	▪ Dr. Mohammed Al Bechari, President of the French National Federation of Muslims & Forum for Peace Trustee Member, France (15 min) ▪ Prof. Stephen Weidner, Writer, Translator and Literacy Critic, Germany (15 min) ▪ Prof. Dr. Hisham Hellyer, Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council & Centre for Advanced Studies on Islam, Science & Civilisation (CASIS), UK (15 min) ▪ Prof. Dr. Sherman Jackson, King Faisal Chair of Islamic Thought and Culture, and Professor of Religion and American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California (USC), USA (15 min) ▪ Discussion (45 min)	Ballroom B
9:00	10:30	**Workshop # 3:** **Islamophobia, the Media and Communication** **Moderator:** Mr. Peter Welby, Consultant, UK	▪ Dr. Rabia Choudhury, Attorney, Podcaster, NYT Bestselling Author of Adnan Story, USA (15 min) ▪ Mr. Idriss El Kanbouri, Writer & Thinker, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Mr. Muddassar Ahmed, Managing Partner, UNITAS Communiations, UK (15 min) ▪ Dr. Imam Qari Asim, Member of the British Government's Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, UK (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom C

Workshop Theme: Islam and the World: An Islamic vision for Global Peace			
10:45	12:00	**Workshop # 1:** **From Abode to Pact** **Moderator:** Prof. Dr. Amany Lubis, Chairperson of Indonesian Council Ulama for Women, Youth & Family Affairs & Forum for Peace Trustee, Indonesia.	▪ Dr. Abdullah Al-Judai, Resident Islamic Scholar, Leeds Grand Mosque, UK (15 min) ▪ Dr. Ahmed Abdul Aziz Al Haddad, Chief Mufti of Dubai, UAE (15 min) ▪ Dr. Ahmed Shehlan, Professor, Dar Al Hadith Hasania Institute, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Discussion (45 min)	Ballroom A

10:45	12:00	**Workshop # 2:** **Jihad and Just War** **Moderator:** Mufti Shawki Allam, Mufti of Egypt, & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Egypt	▪ Dr. Aslamou Ould Sayed Al-Moustaf, Professor at University of Nouakchott, Mauritania (15 min) ▪ Dr. Abdul Hamid Achak, Director, Dar Al Hadith Hasania Institute, & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Discussion (45 min)	Ballroom B
10:45	12:00	**Workshop # 3:** **Peace as an objective of Islamic Law** **Moderator:** Sheikh Mohammad Mukhtar Ould Ambala, Head of Mauritania's Fatwa & Grievences Supreme Council & Forum for Peace Promoting Trustee, Mauritania.	▪ His Eminence Ali Al Amin, Member of the Muslimm Council of Elders, Lebanon (15 min) ▪ Dr. Abdul Majid Al Saghir, Professor of Philisophy and Islamic Thoughts - Mohamed V University, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Dr. Abdel Nasser Abou El Basal, President of the World Islamic Science & Education University, Jordan (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom C
12:00	**13:00**	**Lunch & Rest**		**Terrace**
Workshop Theme: Islam and the Wider World: Ways to Rapprochment & Solidiarity				
13:00	14:30	**Workshop # 1:** **From Jihad of fighting to Jihad of reaching Out** **Moderator:** H.E. Taha Al-Rifa'i, Mufti of Iraq	▪ Dr. Sayyed Ataollah Seyyid Mohajerani, Ex-Minister of Culture of Iran & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, UK (15 min) ▪ Dr. Ibrahim Mashrouh, Professor of Philisophy, Dar Al Hadith Al Hassania Institute, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Dr. Mohammad Sammak, Secretary-General of the National Committee for Christian-Muslim Dialogue & Forum for Promoting Peace Trustee, Lebanon (15 min) ▪ Discussion (45 min)	Ballroom A
13:00	14:30	**Workshop # 2:** **Bridges of Rapprochement and Circles of Solidarity** **Moderator:** H.E. Othman Battikh, Grand Mufti of Tunisia	▪ Dr. Aisha Haddou, Director of the Interfaith & Peacebuilding Research and Training Center of the Rabita Al-Mohammadia of Ulemas, Morocco (15 min) ▪ Dr. Eric Geoffroy, Professor of Islamic Studies in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Strasbourg, France (15 min) ▪ Dr. Amineh Hoti, Executive Director of the Centre for Dialogue and Action, USA (15 min) ▪ Discussion (45 min)	Ballroom B
13:00	14:30	**Workshop # 3:** **Looking forward to Future of Rapprochement & Solidarity in the Global Arena.** **Moderator:** H.E. Dr. Mohamed Fatris Bakaram, Mufti of Singapore.	▪ Dr. Mustafa Cherif, Former Minister of Culture, Algeria (15 min) ▪ Dr. Abdul Jabbar Rifai, Professor, University of Baghdad, Iraq (15 min) ▪ Dr. Brian Grim, President of the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation (RFBF), USA (15 min) ▪ Ms. Ilwad Elman, Director of Programs and Development, Elman Peace and Human Rights Center, Somalia (15 min) ▪ Discussion (30 min)	Ballroom C
16:00	**16:30**	**Final Session** **Communique** **Closing Remarks** **End**		**Ballroom**

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The Hashtags that will be used for the 2017 Forum for Promoting Peace will be:

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