



مجلس حكماء المسلمين
Muslim Council of Elders

Islam and the West: Diversity and Integration

Date: 22 October 2018 - 24 October 2018

Location : Al-Azhar International Conference Center, Cairo, Egypt

Day One: October 22, 2018

Time	Theme	Speaker	
8.30		Transfer to Al-Azhar International Conference Center	
11.30 — 9.30	Opening Session	His Excellency Rexhep Meidani Former President of the Republic of Albania Mr. Yves Leterme Former Prime Minister of Belgium Mr. Filip Vujanović Former President of Montenegro His Eminence Prof. Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif and Chairman of the Muslim	



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		<p style="text-align: center;">Council of Elders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Ismail Serageldin Former Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC)</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Introductory remarks on the Conference</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Ismail Serageldin Former Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC)</p>	
12.30 — 11.30	<p style="text-align: center;">Break</p>		
2.00 — 12.30	<p style="text-align: center;">First Session: The Evolving Relationship Between Islam and the West</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Mustafa El-Feki Former Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Ambassador and Diplomat</p> <p style="text-align: center;">His Grace Justin Welby Primate of the Anglican Communion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Mohamed Abdel Ghani Shama</p>	<p>The session will explore key historical factors and engage in a dynamic discussion on migration, integration, and cultural diversity.</p>



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		<p>Professor of Islamic Studies at the Faculty of Languages and Translation, Al-Azhar University</p> <p>Mr. Kazuo Takahashi Vice President of the Japan Association of Kyosei Studies</p>	
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Time	Theme	Speaker	
3.30 — 2.00	<p>Second Session: Tension Between Muslims and Other Europeans — Citizenship as the Solution</p>	<p>Chairman of the Session: His Excellency Dr. Amr Moussa Former Secretary-General of the Arab League (2001-2011)</p> <p>Mr. Bujar Nishani Former President of the Republic of Albania</p> <p>Mr. Zlatko Lagumdžija Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina</p> <p>Professor Mohie El-Din Afifi Secretary-General of the Islamic Research Academy — Egypt</p>	<p>It seems that extremists, through their acts of terrorism, have managed to fuel tensions between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Europe and the West (see <i>La Fracture</i> by Gilles Kepel). Populist politicians seize on these tensions, deepening and amplifying them. The session explores how we can work to counter this trend.</p>
3.30	Return to the hotel		
20:00 — 18:00	Sightseeing tour		
20.30	Dinner		



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Day Two: October 23, 2018

Time	Theme	Speaker	
8.30	Transfer to Al-Azhar International Conference Center		
11.00 – 9.30	Third Session: Nationalism, Populism, and the Status of Religion	Mr. Yves Leterme Former Prime Minister of Belgium His Eminence Sayyid Ali Al-Amin Religious Authority Mr. Taher Al-Masri Former Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan His Excellency Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu Former Secretary- General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation	The Muslim world is in turmoil, and divisions among Muslims themselves arguably run deeper than conflicts between Muslims and the West. As a result, jihadist movements primarily target Muslims more than non-Muslims, and the vast majority of those combating extremism are also Muslim. Could this reality pave the way for a more open religious discourse in most Muslim-majority countries?





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<p>12.30 — 11.00</p>	<p>Fourth Session: Demographics, Ideology, Migration and the Future</p>	<p>Chairman of the Session:</p> <p>Dr. Mohammed Al-Sammak Secretary-General of Lebanon's National Committee for Christian-Muslim Dialogue</p> <p>Mr. Valdis Zatlers Former President of the Republic of Latvia</p> <p>Mr. Petar Stoyanov Former President of the Republic of Bulgaria</p> <p>His Excellency Rexhep Meidani Former President of the Republic of Albania</p>	<p>Nationalism, secularism, and cultural pluralism often clash with visions grounded in religious authority. So, what role should religion play in contemporary citizenship? In many regions, religion remains a core element of national identity, while cultural pluralism introduces its own challenges. How, then, should we approach cultural minorities in an age marked by rising populism and its politics of fear and hostility?</p> <p>With Africa's population projected to grow throughout the century and Islam spreading widely across the continent, migration pressures on Europe are expected not only to persist but to intensify, potentially becoming unstoppable. Islam is already Europe's second-largest religion, continuing to expand rapidly. Furthermore,</p>
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		<p>Mr. Viktor Yushchenko</p> <p>Former President of the Republic of Ukraine</p>	<p>ongoing violence and tensions in the Middle East drive migration pressures—not only toward Europe but also neighboring regions—and act as a major source of extremist ideology. What should Europe do to address this? And what actions should Muslim-majority countries take?</p>
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13.30 — 12.30	Break		
15.00 — 13.30	<p>Fifth Session: Successful Models of Coexistence – The Egyptian Family House and the Swiss Experience</p>	<p>His Eminence Prof. Dr. Shawki Allam Grand Mufti of Egypt</p> <p>His Excellency President Amine Gemayel Former President of the Republic of Lebanon</p> <p>His Grace Bishop Jeremiah Assistant Secretary- General of the Egyptian Family House</p> <p>Dr. Hoda Badran President of the Egyptian Feminist Union</p> <p>Dr. Khaled Azab Head of the Projects and Central Services Sector in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina</p>	<p>What lessons can we draw from the Egyptian Family House, an initiative co-sponsored by the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar and the Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt? Additionally, what insights can we gain from Switzerland's experience, a country that harmoniously integrates four languages (German, French, Italian, and Romansh) and four major religions (Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, and Islam)?</p>



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	Return to the hotel	15.30
	Sightseeing tour	20:00 — 18:00
	Dinner	20.30





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Day Two: October 24, 2018

Time	Theme	Speaker	
8.30	Transfer to Al-Azhar International Conference Center		
11.00 – 9.30	First Session: Points of Agreement and Points of Difference	Chairman of the Session: Prof. Dr. Mohamed Kamal Imam Head of the Islamic Law Department at the Faculty of Law, Alexandria University – Egypt Dr. Jane McAuliffe Founding Director of National and International Outreach at the Library of Congress Prof. Dr. Samir Boudinar Director of the Al Hokama Center for Peace Research Dr. Sebastian Günther Chair of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Göttingen	The session highlights some historical factors, along with a lively discussion on the philosophy of education and religious education.



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13:30 – 11:00	<p>Second Session: Religious Education – Content and Approach</p>	<p>Chairman of the Session:</p> <p>Prof. Dr. Abbas Shouman Secretary-General of the Council of Senior Scholars and Member of Islamic Research Academy at Al-Azhar Al-Sharif</p> <p>Dr. Christian Cannuyer Belgian Historian of Religion</p> <p>Dr. Catarina Belo Professor of Philosophy at the American University in Cairo</p>	<p>Traditional educational methods persist unchanged in many areas. What needs to be done to modernize this? How can we integrate new technologies into Islamic education? Given that Islam, like other religions, has been studied for centuries in the West, are updates necessary? If so, how should we start? Is it possible to reach a consensus on priorities between Muslim and Western scholars?</p>
14:00	Return to the hotel		
20:00 – 18:00	Sightseeing tour		