



Online Conference Report

“Countering Islamophobia: Deconstructing Misconceptions”



Organized by
Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad on
27th January, 2021



“CGSS is a Public Policy Institute with a mission to help improve policy and decision-making through analysis and research”

Copyright © Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS)

All rights reserved

Please do not disseminate, distribute or reproduce, in whole or part, this report without prior consent of CGSS



CGSS
Center for Global & Strategic Studies

5th Floor Khyber 4 Plaza, G-15 Markaz, Islamabad, Pakistan

Tel: +92-51-2328615

Email: infocgss@yahoo.com Web: www.cgss.com.pk



Table of Contents

CONCEPT NOTE.....	4
BIOGRAPHIES OF THE SPEAKERS.....	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/ KEY TAKEAWAYS.....	9
ANNEXURE 1: TRANSCRIPT'S OF THE SPEECHES.....	13
ANNEXURE 2: PRESS RELEASE.....	25
ANNEXURE 3: MEDIA COVERAGE.....	27
ANNEXURE 4: VIDEO COVERAGE.....	31



CONCEPT NOTE

Islamophobia is defined as the dislike of or prejudice against Islam, and individuals who are Muslims. In present times, the anti-Muslim sentiments have grown up to an extent that have resulted in massive violence, genocide and massacre of Muslims and their liberties around the globe. In this aspect, the world is witnessing another surge in Islamophobia. Muslim nations are now standing at the cross roads. With the increase anti-Muslim bigotry in the current political and societal environment, ethnic minorities in western nations have experienced highly negative outcomes fueled by Islamophobia. It existed even before the terrorist attacks of 9/11, but it got intense and notorious during the past decade. The exaggerated hatred, fear, and hostility towards Islam and Muslim's culture is perpetuated by negative stereotypes that have resulted in biasness, vigilantism, marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from acquiring their basic prerogatives in social, political and civil life. The discrimination has now gone beyond the boundary. France, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Germany, the UK, Czech Republic, Hungary, Greece, France and Portugal, in each of these states, the rhetoric's of Islamophobia is different. They perceive Islamic practices and sites, such as mosques or community centers, as inherently violent, threatening and incompatible with the view of a European way of life. For example, in France and Canada, Women wearing headscarf is prohibited and being visibly Muslim is viewed against their values and culture. However, Muslim nations are echoing for more than a decade about the importance of tackling this issue. In this regard, a wave of public protests erupted from Muslim countries in Middle East and Asia in massive numbers including Qatar, Kuwait, Syria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Iran and many others. It is unfortunate that Islamophobia is surging again but it has been a recurring theme in the world politics. It can only be put to an end by giving a strong collective response from Muslim bloc and initiate an inter-civilizational dialogue with the western world. In this context, an effort has been made through this Conference to establish strong response to collectively counter the rising conundrum against Muslims, Islam as a religion, cultures and find future ways to maintain unified efforts and role of Muslim states in order to erase existing prejudices and the bigotry rhetoric of the western bloc that abrupt violence.



BIOGRAPHIES OF THE SPEAKERS

His Excellency Ali Muhammad Khan, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Pakistan



His Excellency Ali Muhammad Khan is a Pakistani politician who is the current Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, in office since 17 September 2018. He is currently a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, since August 2018. He is a Lawyer by profession. Previously he was a member of the National Assembly from June 2013 to May 2018.

Dr. Mahboob Hussain, Chairman, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore



Dr. Mahboob completed Post-Doctorate Degree from University of Oxford, UK. He completed PhD from University of the Punjab, Lahore in 2013. His fields of specialization are modern political history, institution building, state and society, politics of Pakistan. Supervising Teaching Practice of Approximately 30 Prospective Teachers of Secondary Schools per year from 1997 to 2004. He has various international publications to his credit. World Bank has also cited his articles in its report about Pakistan. He is Higher Education Commission's approved supervisor for PhD. He also holds Post-Doctorate Fellowship, awarded by Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC), for Oxford University.



Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Bahawalpur



Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob is currently serving as Vice Chancellor of Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB). He is an academic leader par excellence having 25 years of experience in teaching, research and industrial projects in various prestigious institutions in Pakistan and abroad. He got his PhD in Electrical Engineering from National University of Science and Technology and obtained BS and MS degrees from Florida State University USA. Dr. Athar Mahboob founded Ibn Khaldun Systems. He was decorated with Tamgha-e-Imtiaz by Government of Pakistan in 2012.

Dr. Minhas Majeed Marwat, Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar, Peshawar.



Dr. Minhas is a Ph.D Scholar from University of Peshawar with thesis on “Role of Religion on Foreign Policy particularly US and Pakistan”. She also has done research on foreign policy decision-making, the U.S. and Pakistan; theories of International Relations, Foreign Policy decision-making, Conflict resolution, US and Pakistan Relations; Clash of Civilizations, Regional Politics of South, South West and Central Asia.



Dr. Faheem Akhter, Head of Department Management Science and Humanities & Social Sciences, DHA Suffa University, Karachi



Dr. Faheem Akhter is Assistant Professor, Head of Department Management Science and Dean of Department Humanities at the DHA Suffa University, Karachi. He is an HEC Approved PhD Supervisor and has expertise in economic development, governance and sustainability, social reforms, national and global conflict.

He has 25+ Years' Experience in diverse fields including higher education, legal affairs and corporate and Industrial Sector.



EXECUITVE SUMMARY/ KEY TAKEAWAYS



Executive Summary/ Key Takeaways

1. Historical Perspective of Islamophobia.

- a. Islamophobia is defined as the dislike of or prejudice against Islam, and individuals who are Muslims. However, there are different interpretations and opinions about the exact origin of the term.
- b. According to the Oxford dictionary, the use of the term Islamophobia can be traced back to the year 1923 C.E. The term was used by a Spanish historian, Américo Castro in 1968 as well. Some scholars claim that in 1985 article "Orientalism reconsidered" highlighted the origin of the term for the first time.
- c. After 9/11, the superpowers shifted their focus towards Islam and portrayed it as a serious threat. Subsequently, the term was taken negatively in the western literature and media.
- d. In the present era, the anti-Muslim sentiments have grown up to an extent that has resulted in unfortunate events of massive violence, genocide, and massacre of Muslims and their liberties around the globe. In this aspect, the world is witnessing another surge in Islamophobia.
- e. With the increased anti-Muslim bigotry in the current political and societal environment, the ethnic minorities in western nations have experienced highly negative outcomes fueled by Islamophobia. It existed even before the terrorist attacks of 9/11, but it has perilously got intense and notorious during the past decade.
- f. The imminent issue surrounded by Islamophobia is the disunity among Muslim states. The Islamic world is divided politically and religiously. Politically into the pro-western camp and the conservative camp, whereas religiously into Shia-Sunni sects.

2. Existing Prejudices and Biased Rhetoric of the Western Bloc

- a. Islamophobia has subjected Muslims to racial profiling, discrimination, and stigmatization. Consequently, both indigenous and immigrants' Muslims have developed insecurities in their daily lives and they face denial in getting their basic human rights.



- b. The discrimination has now gone beyond the boundary. The western and European states have different rhetoric's vis-à-vis Islamophobia. They perceive Islamic practices and sites, such as mosques as inherently violent, threatening, and incompatible with the view of their way of life.
- c. A 2019 report Gallup titled "Hijacked by Hate: American philanthropy and Islamophobia networks" states that there are 1096 organizations that are responsible for funding almost 39 groups to millions of dollars to spread anti-Muslim sentiments.
- d. A detailed (yearlong researched) report by One Path Network in 2017 states that about 5 of Australia's biggest newspapers published more than 3000 articles referring to Islam and Muslims alongside words like extremism, terrorism, radical and violent.
- e. In 2016, a report found out that 49% of Australian sports banned Muslims immigrants. Another report by Islamophobia Register Australia directly linked hate crimes with Muslims and negative media coverage of Muslim community.
- f. Another study in 2016 by researchers at the Griffith University found that nearly 70% of the Australians admitted that they know nothing about Islam and Muslims yet they spread hate against the religion.
- g. Due to the extremist discourse, heinous crimes and violent behavior in the name of Islam have created a reverse symbiotic link between the phenomenon of terrorism and Islam. Associating Islam and terrorism is completely wrong.
- h. The negative rhetoric and prejudices should be curtailed with the collective effort of the religious scholars and experts of Islam in spreading the real essence of Islam. Moreover, the peaceful dialogue process and building true positive image of Islam, will help in curtailing the adversity of the biased rhetoric of the west.



3. Key Takeaways

- a. Harmony and unity among Muslims is imperative to curtail the rise of Islamophobia. This should be done through an integrated platform i.e., the OIC.
- b. To deconstruct these misconceptions about Islam, there should be an integrated connectivity channel that frequently conduct conferences, consortiums, seminars, workshops, and inter-religious dialogues for creating awareness among people about Islamophobia and the realization to mitigate it effectively.
- c. Inter-faith dialogue process should be facilitate to create harmony, deliver peaceful message of Islam and tackle the misconception about Muslims and Islam as a religion.
- d. The campaigns and programs to create positive rhetoric between the West and Muslims should be facilitated by the Muslim Ummah, leaderships of the states, representatives of inter-government organizations, civil society, media, educational elite, and various other aligned stakeholders.
- e. It should be the responsibility of each Muslim to check on those extremist elements, who are spreading their wrong interpretation of Islam for their vested interests and politico-economic gain. In this regard, our religious leaders should interpret the Holy Quran in its true letter and spirit and accordance with Sunnah.
- f. Islam is the religion of peace and love. People have sheltered in Islam because it always welcomes everyone. So, religious scholars should put their efforts into researches and portray the true teachings of Islam and Shariah.
- g. To eradicate prejudices, bias-ness, and bigotry against Muslims and Islam, the role of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is significant. Since the inception of the OIC in 1969, it has been working suitably to promote global peace, stability, harmony, security, and developments. However, it is still required to strengthen collective efforts by all the Muslim states to tackle the myriads of challenges due to the surge in Islamophobia.



ANNEXURES



ANNEXURE 1: TRANSCRIPT'S OF THE SPEECHES

Speaker 1

**Dr. Mahboob Hussain, Chairman, Department of History and Pakistan Studies,
University of the Punjab, Lahore**

Topic: "Historical Perspective of Islamophobia: Roots and Causes"

Intolerance towards other religions is universal and as old as the human itself. The wars spanning over centuries like crusades, genocide and deep-rooted hostility based on religion and sometimes within the same religion for example, in Europe the 30 years' war was fought on basis of the religion. Islam at the time of its emergence faced severe opposition, as some quarters represented it as a problem to the world. Islam has become a victim of racial prejudices due to its rapid expansion worldwide, in a very short period. Its expansion and tendency to grow rapidly, challenged the west politically, culturally and theologically. Similarly, the media portrays Muslims as alien, foreign, backward, uneducated, and violent to western society. This is the perception created by the western media. They depict Islam as a threat to them. Particularly after 9/11, Islamophobia has been found to be manufactured in their attitude.

Moving towards the origin of Islamophobia, the concept is explained by the combination of two words; Islam and phobia. Islam is a religion while a phobia is defined as an abnormal instance. An irrational fear of a given situation, islamophobia can be defined as an abnormally intense and irrational fear of Islam. Therefore, the origin of the term Islamophobia does not seem to be well researched in the present-day literature. There are huge confusions regarding the first use of the term, however, the term is in common use since the Runnymede report of November 1997 published by a leading think tank of U.K. After that report, the term Islamophobia came in print for the first time.

According to a Professor of Boston University, the first use of the term Islamophobia was made in the 1980s. Though he did not specifically refer to where it got published. In 1985 a famous article "Orientalism Reconsidered" by Edward W. Said, described islamophobia in the light of orientals and occidentals. Other literature suggests that the term islamophobia was used by a Spanish historian, Américo Castro in 1968. His focus was to see the influence of the U.S and Muslims on the history of Spain. In 1978, a French professor



explained in his book that islamophobia is being replaced by Arab-phobia. Looking at the perspective and context under which the term Islamophobia was used, it seems evident that the fear of Islam as an ideology was being replaced by the fear of Arab as an ethnic group.

Nonetheless, some scholars claim that in his 1985 article on Orientalism, Edward Said reconsidered the first use of the term in English lecture. Interestingly, the Oxford English dictionary tells the first use of the word in 1923. In the journal of theological studies, however, without any proper citation, a deeper search reveals that the English version of the term islamophobia was used in an article entitled "The History of Religion" by Stanley A. Cook in 1923. Also, the term was used in English in 1976 in another article entitled 'Dialogue' by Gustave E. Von in the International Journal of Middle East.

So, this clearly shows that the literature produced on islamophobia is made in haste. The available lecture demonstrates clearly that the term in English or any other language is quite new to modern literature. The reason for Islam and Muslims as being less focused objects from the early 20th century till the late 1980s was Communism phobia. Communism remained the biggest threat for the western world during the cold war period. After the end of the cold war, the world's superpowers shifted their attention towards Islam and portrayed it as a big threat, and subsequently, the term got placed negatively in the writings and media.

Moreover, a yearlong studied report by One Path Network in 2017, which is an Australian-based network, states that about 5 of Australia's biggest newspapers published more than three thousand articles referring to Islam and Muslims alongside words like extremism, terrorism, radical and violent. So, 8 articles a day portraying Islam negatively and almost 152 front pages about Muslims as a threat have been disseminated among the public in Australia, with negative coverage of Islam. In 2016, an essential report found out that 49% of Australian sports banned Muslim immigrants. So, this year a report by Islamophobia Register Australia directly linked hate crimes with Muslims and negative media coverage of the Muslim community. Another study in the same year by researchers at Griffith University found that nearly 70% of Australians admitted that they know nothing about Islam and Muslims yet they spread hate against the religion.



Speaker 2

H.E Ali Muhammad Khan, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Pakistan

Topic: Policy Options for Pakistan to Counter Rising Islamophobia

We need to engage with each other first and then with the people who are supposed to be Islamophobic. First, we have to understand what Islamophobia is, and are we correct in blaming the west alone for all the follies we have committed? There may be genuine hate for Islam but what is our role in increasing or decreasing that? It is a very diverse topic, which has many aspects that need to be covered by the scholars. The following sentence elaborates the personality of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) as Rehmat-ul-Lil-Aalameen, not Rehmat-ul-lil-Muslimeen. Rehmat means blessings in Arabic. He was considered and is still considered, for all times to come, by the Allah Almighty as the Rehma, the blessing, for the whole of the universe, for all the Alimeen which includes not only Muslims but non-Muslims and whatever is in the universe.

The philosophy of Islam is that, if a person is unnecessarily, illegally, without any reason, without any due legal process, hurt or killed, is like killing the whole of humanity. This is the message of Islam. Saving one human being is like saving the whole human race. Islam is a religion whose base and literal meaning is peace, so how has this happened that the religion which was supposed to be a religion of peace is now considered a religion of hate and oppression by some, not all but some. The world is a comity of nations, it has become a global village and in the split of a second, everybody is connected. There are bound to be some misconceptions too, but there is an issue of general hate against Islam in the west. There is a segment in the west that genuinely hates Islam.

Most of them have misconceptions and they do not know Islam and what Muslims stand for. Here the role of Muslims around the world and especially of Pakistan because the country was made in the name of Islam, needs to work on those confusions and misconceptions. Quran elaborates that Muslims have good relations with non-Muslims them but don't expect that they will be like your brothers. It is not possible. This implies that not to expect too much from the non-Muslims but at the same time not to go after



throat as well; i.e. live and let live. When Islam spread from Madinah to the nook and corner of the world, it didn't spread through sword. As Quran says that there is no compulsion in religion. It was only because of the Husn-e-Ikhlaq, the good manners, the Sunnah, and the teachings of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) because of which people embraced Islam.

However, we need to think are there any countries being run according to the basic tenants and principles of Islam in totality? Yes, there are billions of practicing Muslims, but there is not an inch in the whole wide world where Sharia as it is supposed to be implemented stands for as a way of life. Because Islam has come to correct not only individual life but collective life. Unfortunately, we are having glimpses of true Islam in some Muslim countries but not in totality. Islam is not only about offering Salah, going to Hajj, giving Zakat, and keeping the fast. It is a way of life like in the State of Madinah. The foundation of Islam is justice. If there will be no justice, there will be no peace.

Have we established the justice systems in the Islamic world? Sadly no. There is a human psyche that you go with those that are of your kind ordinarily. If they are from another religion, another race, they are bound to have some sort of misconceptions about them. Therefore, Muslims need to engage with the West through dialogue. Prime Minister Imran Khan tried to engage with them in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) last year. So, there are many things on which we need to work but the basic thing is there exists some genuine feeling of Islamophobia in the west but the majority of it is based upon misconceptions.

Then there is the white man's burden too. The west has not done justice in their own sense as well, because when you go and oppress people there is bound to be resistance. The people, the son and daughters of the soil, they are bound to resist. The whole of the west is not the oppressor, there are segments in the west who have done that. There are billions of people who do not own what Israel did in 1948 or still doing in Gaza or the West Bank or any part of Palestine. Many people are sitting in the US, many people in the government sector, who oppose the policies which Israelis are doing. The same is the case when the USA invaded Iraq. Not a single WMD was recovered. So, there are follies of the west which they have to realize they need to correct. Then comes the role of dialogue and the dialogue can only be initiated among states.



As a Muslim, my message to the co-Pakistanis would be, first, we have to put our house in order. If you want to engage with the west, and want them to stop the oppression in countries like Palestine, or if you want them to raise voice against oppression in Kashmir, we also at the same time, put ourselves in the order. There have been seventy-odd years now. We made this country in the name of Islam. The founder of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said that our true salvation lies in following the golden rules of conduct set for us by the greatest lawgiver of Islam. That is to lay the foundation of democracy under true Islamic principles and socio-economic justice. He talked against usury and he wanted to have an Islamic system of banking and governance based on the Quranic principles and Shariah. All of these things have been forgotten.

We have to talk about the oppression in Kashmir and Palestine, but before that, we have to give them a system that we are Muslims and that is how peacefully we live and care for the entire humanity. The Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H) was very clear about the rights of non-Muslims and there is not a single instance in his life when he forced somebody towards Islam. And we need to understand Islam ourselves. If we want the west to remove their misunderstandings about Islam, first we have to read and understand Islam ourselves. This program is an important step in this regard and hopefully, we will achieve our goal of Pakistan as an Islamic Welfare State as the Prime Minister of Pakistan envisions.

The young leaders of Muslim Ummah and Pakistan should understand that the world is for those who try to strive hard. If you are close to Allah, HE loves you because you are from the nation of His Beloved Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). When you want to conquer the world, conquer with the knowledge and dialogue. We have to focus on education, this was the first message given to Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), which was IQRA and we need to focus on it.



Speaker 3

Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Bahawalpur

Topic: The Systematic Genocide of Muslims around the world and Moral Imperatives

We have been taught in our faith that Muslims are one body and if one part of the body aches, the other parts of the body ache. Muslims whether in Indian occupied Kashmir, Burma, Africa, or anywhere if killed merely because of their faith is painful. This particular phenomenon of people being killed for their faith is not new at all and it has existed for centuries. The Quran is a book of guidance for all Muslims as they believe it is the very word of God and is immutable, unchallengeable for every Muslim.

It is the enlightenment that has happened in the west in the last few centuries that only recently they have realized this practice of Islamophobia that has existed in their culture for a very long time. But why does Islamophobia actually exist? There were some seminal ideas highlighted by a person named Muhammad Asad who had converted from Judaism to Islam and wrote his autobiography 'The Road to Makkah'. When he tried to study the phenomena of 'islamophobia' he found out that it is ingrained in the west because the very foundations when the western civilization was being established after the fall of the Roman Empire, the European continent was experiencing the establishment of various kingdoms under the influence of attacks of barbarians, the Roman Empire collapsed and then the Islamic power was rising, Spain was conquered by the Muslims in the 8th century AD and Muslims also conquered all of the North Africa and the Middle East which were the cradles of the Christian civilization.

At that time the hatred for Islam was nurtured into the birth of Western Civilization. So the view of Islam as a threat was part and parcel of the very foundation of the western civilization. Why should the west hate Islam and why should it be an issue between the West and Islam. The reason is very interesting and is so much similar and close to the values of the west. The western world thinks of itself as the pinnacle of modernization and proud inheritances of the Greek-Roman civilizations. However, the values and social system which the west has come up with, are the same values that exist in Islam; the dignity of man, human rights, freedom of religion, elimination of exploitation, and so



forth. The majority of the areas where this European and western civilization existed became Muslims dominated, not because of force but because of knowledge. To conclude, Islamophobia is an old phenomenon, the recognition by the west has been a recent phenomenon that is why they have invented a word for it, i.e., Islamophobia because Islam and the West compete in the same space. However, Islam is an accommodating religion. The Holy book of Islam, the Quran treats all the places of religious worship with equal footing.



Speaker 4

Dr. Minhas Majeed Marwat, Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar, Peshawar

Topic: Role of Muslim Countries and Institutions, Specifically OIC, in Effectively Tackling Islamophobia

The worrying trends of Islamophobia are on the rise not only in the western countries but in many other parts of the world, largely due to identified factors including the growing ideologies of the far-right, refugee crisis, immigration, misperceptions among the followers of different religions, and the provocative discourse by some media outlets. In reaction there is extremist discourse and violent behavior by some extremists groups, which have led to heinous crimes in the name of Islam, thus creating a reverse symbiotic link between the phenomenon of terrorism and extremism on the one hand and Islamophobia on the other hand. Much of the Islamophobia has crossed the Atlantic into Europe and into the Balkan countries, which has consequently increased the anti-Muslim sentiments and the proliferation of Islamophobia.

A study by Gallup in 2019 states in its report titled “Hijacked by Hate: American philanthropy and Islamophobia networks”. According to this report, 1096 organizations are responsible for funding almost 39 groups to spread anti-Muslim sentiments. In the Muslim world and the Muslim organizations, there is no denying that Islamophobia has subjected Muslims to racial profiling, discrimination, negative stereotyping, and stigmatization. As a result, Muslims, both indigenous and immigrants, have developed feelings of insecurity in their daily lives and they face denial of their basic human rights.

These Islamophobes, in their atrocious campaigns, equate Islam with terrorism and intolerance. The epistemology of the Western far-right, maintain that there is a threat from Islam and it is a violent religion. There is no logic in it because Islamophobia may function differently, but in essence, the phenomenon is connected to the global political context that is very much structured by the post-colonial order and related to contemporary US hegemony in the world. There are very critical issues caused by Islamophobia that needs to be addressed not only by the Muslim world but also by the western bloc as well. Some of the attacks like the attack on Mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand, and some far-right extremists burnt the copies of the Holy Quran and the



republication of the offensive cartoons of the Prophet (P.B.U.H). These are the issues that we need to address not by reacting to them violently but by engaging in dialogue.

It is not always the state that can always engage in dialogue but most of the time various quarters within the society need to engage because the society responds to these incidents violently. The State should also engage individual organizations in its society for peaceful responses. They should be engaged in dialogue by giving a strong collective peaceful response. Therefore, the Muslim world should collectively, in consultation with each other, work for peaceful solutions to this issue. Decolonization of everyday Islamophobia involves both reflecting on and transforming the epistemology of Islamophobia through a radical humanist ontology. Now radical humanism refers to a global philosophy that emphasizes the oneness of the human race that we are equal human beings; the capacity of man to develop his powers; and to arise at inner harmony and the establishment of a peaceful world. The manifestation of this ontology is the anti-terrorist tactic of resistance, which involves non-violent practices and gestures of love. A gesture of love from the oppressed is the trans-modern, de-colonial character to the terrorism despotism. The Organization of Islamic Council (OIC) has been successful in many areas but it has also faced failure and challenges in certain cases. The modern world currently, is facing myriads of challenges due to increasing Islamophobia because it poses a threat to international peace and security.

The OIC, since its inception in 1969, has been working to promote global peace, stability, harmony, security, and developments. Today, several conflicts and troubling spots are situated in the Muslim world and the primary target of Islamophobia are Islam and Muslims in some western or European societies. This issue has been debated in United Nations and other international organizations for some time now. But to achieve concrete results it requires sustained and additional efforts on the part of the international community, and political commitment on the part of OIC member states. OIC, as a platform realizes the threat of Islamophobia and it has passed various recommendations to take initiatives to address the issue at the institutional level. Later it conducted its third extra-ordinary Islamic summit at Makkah and adopted its ten-year program of action in 2005. In this summit, it was decided to take the matters to mitigate the issue.

OIC also formed the Islamophobia observatory to observe the magnitude of Islamophobia all over the world. This observatory publishes its monthly/annual reports since 2008 and



these annual reports are written based on observations from monthly bulletins which are made conversant to all observant cases of Islamophobia all over the world. The platform frequently conducts conferences, consortiums, seminars, workshops and inter-religious dialogues for creating awareness among people about Islamophobia and the realization to mitigate it effectively. Its target population of address mostly consists of leadership and representatives of inter-government organizations, state and government officials, civil society, media, educational elite and various stakeholders especially those from the host population of Islamophobia. It also took the initiative to establish a technical body to detect and block the blasphemous and Islamophobic content on the internet. It is called the Computer Emergency Response Team which was established by the resolution passed in 2009 in the conference of Foreign Ministers of OIC.

Developing a culture of peace and promoting inter-faith harmony through dialogue remained at the heart of the cultural diplomacy of OIC. The initiative of KSA to establish King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz International Center for inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue is of critical importance in this regard. Coming to the challenges faced by Muslims and OIC, it must be noted that mass media is not only the launching pad of Islamophobia but social media is also the most effective tool of this phenomenon which is very hard to monitor and block. Even several Muslim governments like UAE, Indonesia and also Pakistan banned the use of YouTube as a protest against the blasphemous content. Given the current surge of Islamophobia, OIC can emerge most relevant organizations of the world by playing a constructive role between Muslims and the people of other faiths. There are various political, economic and religious causes and challenges for the Muslim countries and OIC in countering islamophobia. Most prominent among them is the disunity among Muslim states. The Islamic world is divided politically and religiously. Politically, states have been divided into two camps, one is pro-western camp and the other represents the conservative camp, and there is a constant struggle between these two groups. The pro-west camp is keen to implement western political order, whereas, the order camp adopts and spread an Islamic political system. On the other hand, the religious, Shia-Sunni divide is a concern and further created in hurdles in the success of OIC. The Muslim as a whole need to unite in terms of one Ummah.



Speaker 5

Dr. Faheem Akhter, Assistant Professor, Head of Department Management Science and Dean of Department Humanities at the DHA Suffa University, Karachi

Topic: Unpacking Structural Islamophobia: What happens when stereotypes and prejudice go unchecked?

Islam is the religion of peace. It is the fastest-growing religion in the world, particularly in the west. Since 9/11, people in west started researching on Islam. Currently, research says that Islam is the second-largest religion in the world after Christianity. About 1.9 to 2 billion Muslims are globally present and it is further expected to grow in 2030 up to 26% to the world's population. There is more Muslim-phobia and less Islamophobia. If you see the lifestyle of the west, you see that they are having more Islamic teachings rather than Muslims. Unfortunately, we have confined Islam to the main obligations only and superseded the outcomes of religious teaching. There are few misconceptions about Islam.

First is that terrorism is Muslims monopoly which is wrong. We can quote so many examples where Muslims are being targeted by non-Muslims. So, tagging Muslims as terrorists is unjust. Second misperception exist within the innocent Muslims that ALLAH is only for the Muslims. This is spread among the less learned Muslims and the fundamentalists that the universe is only for them which is against the teachings of Islam. GOD has created this world and Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) was sent for the entire universe. Third misperception is Jihad is an offensive holy war. We need to correct this ideology. This misconception exists among the fundamentalist extremists ho are unaware of actual Islamic teachings. That is the reason that Islam is being defamed in the west and among the world. So, the conflict is between the true ideology of Islam and the ideology of fundamentalists/fanatics. They are the people who are damaging Islam without knowing the true teaching of Islam. If we let the misconception grow then Islam is going to be damaged.

Fundamentalists are making innocent people hostage to their ideology rather than telling them to follow Quran and Sunnah. If we let it go unchecked, there would be social and



religious imbalance and people will be divided into different schools of thought. Ultimately the society will be divided and people rather than following true Islam would be following fundamentalist version of Islam. Blaming only west to spread anti-Islam sentiment is not the only reason true. Islam has been overtaken by those who interprets Islam as their own perception. So, there is a need to highlight those people and bring them to limelight who know true about Islamic teaching and should make efforts to diminish the misperception about Islam. Everyone in the society should learn true meaning of the Holy Quran and this is the duty of our religious leaders that they should interpret the Holy Quran as its true spirit and Sunnah. Islam is the religion of peace and fastest growing religion. People have sheltered in Islam because it always welcomes everyone. So, scholars should come out, do researches and portray true teachings of Islam. People responsible for spreading their own interpretation on Islam for political and economic gains need to be held accountable.



ANNEXURE 2: PRESS RELEASE

On 27th January 2021 Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized an Online Conference on, "Countering Islamophobia: Deconstructing Misconceptions." The conference aimed to understand the rising dilemma of Islamophobia, examine the world's perspective, and establish a unified response by Muslim nations to tackle the anti-Muslim sentiments.

The conference commenced with the speech of His Excellency Ali Muhammad Khan, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Pakistan, he discussed Policy Options for Pakistan to Counter Rising Islamophobia. He stated that it is a very diverse topic and many of its aspects must be covered. To begin with, he mentioned that our Holy Prophet (PBUH) was sent as a blessing not only for Muslims but for the entire humanity, it is something to ponder that why our religion of peace is now seen as a religion of hatred?

The misconceptions spread in the world is because globally there is no practical display of the teachings of Islam. It is important to practically manifesting the true spirit of Islam. He also emphasized that the main role of Muslims is to engage with western countries and people with constructive dialogues. He also highlighted the role of educated youth and its role in spreading awareness about our religion and its values. Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice-Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Bahawalpur, highlighted the Systematic Genocide of Muslims around the world and Moral Imperatives. He stated that for Muslims the unchallengeable word is of the Quran, it is important to follow its teachings to be true Muslims. Muslims should realize and spread that Islam is a religion of accommodation, from the very start our religion teaches us to respect other religions and their places of worship it also protects the rights of non-Muslims. He concluded by emphasizing that Islamophobia has always existed in the west and there needs to be a collective approach to handle it effectively.

Dr. Mahboob Hussain, Chairman, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of Punjab, Lahore shared his thoughts on the Historical Perspective of Islamophobia: Roots and Causes. He explained the concept and meaning of Islamophobia in detail and stated that Islamophobia can be defined as an irrational fear of Islam. Its first use is said to be in the 1980s. He highlighted that Islam became a victim of racial prejudice due to its



worldwide expansion in a very short period, it challenged the west culturally and politically. He also highlighted the origin of Islamophobia. He also presented an overview of the research that how the Australian public is being bombarded by anti-Islamic news by its media under negative connotations.

Dr. Minhas Majeed Marwat, Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar, Peshawar discussed the Role of Muslim Countries and Institutions, Specifically OIC, in Effectively Tackling Islamophobia. She highlighted the role of the Organization of Islamic Council and various steps taken by it. The OIC has been successful in many areas but it has come short vis-à-vis certain challenges. Right from when it was initiated in 1969, OIC has worked for harmony and stability of the world. Moreover, it has passed various resolutions to take issues of Islamophobia to the institutional level. It also formed an Islamophobia observatory to observe the magnitude of Islamophobia from around the world. It also took the initiative to start a technical body to keep a strict check on blasphemous content worldwide.

Dr. Faheem Akhter, Head of Department Management Science and Humanities & Social Sciences, DHA Suffa University, Karachi discussed, Unpacking Structural Islamophobia: What happens when stereotypes and prejudice go unchecked?

Dr. Faheem rightfully pointed out that Islam is a religion of peace, it is the fastest-growing religion in the world and particularly in the west. He also highlighted that after the event of 9/11 more and more people started to research and study Islam. Dr. Faheem presented some statistics and stated that a study shows that by 2030 the Muslim population will increase by 35% across the globe.

He also mentioned that the west is not particularly afraid of Islam but it is afraid of Muslims. This is the area of concern that we must work on. Muslims have a collective responsibility to remove the tag of terrorists from themselves and spread the true teachings of our religion. He stated that we should get guidance from Holy Quran rather than taking guidance from those who are taking us away from it. The conference was moderated by Mr. Tariq Khattak, Member Board of Experts, CGSS, and was attended by 70 people from various sectors. It was also viewed live on social media platforms by more than 300 viewers.



ANNEXURE 3: MEDIA COVERAGE

DailyMail International

<https://dailymailnews.pk/2021/01/28/cgss-holds-virtual-conference-on-countering-islamophobia/>

Suggests.....	2825446
Osso Culture.....	656912
Omar Khayyam.....	812847
EMBASSIES	
China Embassy.....	3824798
Alghadstan.....	2624505
Algeria.....	2206682
Americon.....	3080100
Argentina.....	2825561
Austrata HC.....	2626365
Austria.....	279228
Bangladesh HC.....	2279287
Belgium.....	2827091
Bosnia.....	2761041
Brazil.....	2779561
British HC.....	282235
Bruce Detassation.....	2822783
Bulgaria.....	275987
Canada HC.....	2279303
China Economic.....	222626
Croatia.....	2822662
Czech.....	2274304
Denmark.....	2826724
Egypt.....	2208072

CGSS holds virtual conference on countering Islamophobia

By Ahsan Khan Younsuzi

ISLAMABAD: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) Islamabad organized an Online Conference on, 'Countering Islamophobia: Decountering 'Misconceptions', here this Wednesday. The conference aimed to understand the rising dilemma of Islamophobia, examine the world's perspective, and establish a unified response by Muslim nations to tackle the anti-Muslim sentiments. The conference commenced with the speech of His Excellency Ali Muhammad Khan, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Pakistan, he discussed Policy Options for Pakistan to Counter Rising Islamophobia. He stated that it is a very diverse topic and many of its aspects must be covered. To begin with, he mentioned that our Holy Prophet (PBUH) was sent as a blessing not only for Muslims but for the entire humanity, it is something to ponder that why our religion of peace is now seen as a religion of hatred?

The misconceptions spread in the world is because globally there is no practical display of the teachings of Islam. It is important to practically manifesting the true spirit of Islam. He also emphasized that the message of Muslims to engage with western countries and people with constructive dialogues. He also highlighted the role of educational youth and its role in spreading awareness about our religion and its values. Eminent Prof. Dr. Ahsan Habibullah, Vice-Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Bahawalpur, highlighted the Systematic Genocide of Muslims around the world and Moral Implications. He stated that for Muslims the unshakable word is of the Quran, it is important to follow its teachings to be true Muslims. Muslims should realize and spread that Islam is a religion of across-modernism, from the very start our religion teaches us to respect other religions and their places of worship it also protects the rights of non-Muslims. He concluded by emphasizing that Islamophobia has always existed in the west and there needs

to be a collective approach to handle it effectively. Dr. Mubrez Hussain, Chairman, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of Punjab, Lahore shared his thoughts on the Historical Perspective of Islamophobic Roots and

Causes. He explained the concept and meaning of Islamophobia in detail and stated that Islamophobia can be defined as an irrational fear of Islam. Its first use is said to be in the 1980s. He highlighted that Islam became a victim of racial propa-

ganda due to its worldwide expansion in a very short period, it challenged the west culturally and politically. He also highlighted the origin of Islamophobia. He also presented an overview of the research that how the Australian public is being bombarded by anti-Islamic news by its media under negative connotations.

Dr. Mishaq Masood, Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar, Peshawar discussed the Role of Muslim Countries and Institutions, Specifically OIC, in Effectively Tackling Islamophobia. She highlighted the role of the Organization of Islamic Council and various steps taken by it. The OIC has been successful in many areas but it has come short vis-à-vis certain challenges. Right from when it was initiated in 1969, OIC has worked for harmony and stability of the world. Moreover, it has passed various resolutions to take issues of Islamophobia to the institutional level. It also formed an Islamophobia observatory to observe the magnitude of Islamophobia from around

the world. It also took the initiative to start a technical body to keep a strict check on blasphemous content worldwide.

Dr. Faheem Akhtar, Head of Department Management Science and Humanities & Social Sciences, DHA Sarda University, Karachi discussed, Unpacking Structural Islamophobia: What happens when stereotypes and prejudice go unchecked? Dr. Faheem rightly pointed out that Islam is a religion of peace, it is the fastest-growing religion in the world and particularly in the west. He also highlighted that after the event of 9/11 more and more people started to research and study Islam. Dr. Faheem presented some statistics and stated that a study shows that by 2030 the Muslim population will increase by 37% across the globe. He also mentioned that the west is not particularly afraid of Islam but it is afraid of Muslims. This is the area of concern that we must work on. Muslims have a collective responsibility to remove the tag of terrorism from themselves and spread the true teachings of our religion.



National Herald Tribune

<https://www.dailynht.com/epaper/main.php?action=epaper&id=main&page=2&dt=28-01-2021>

ONLINE CONFERENCE ON "COUNTERING ISLAMOPHOBIA: DECONSTRUCTING MISCONCEPTIONS" ORGANIZED BY CENTER FOR GLOBAL & STRATEGIC STUDIES (CGSS), ISLAMABAD

Main role of the Muslims is to engage with western countries and people with constructive dialogues: H.E Ali Muhammad Khan

Islamophobia has always existed in the west and there needs to be a collective approach to handle it effectively: Engr. Prof. Dr. AtharMahboob

SALEEM RAIS
ISLAMABAD, January 27: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized an Online Conference on, "Countering Islamophobia: Deconstructing Misconceptions". The conference aimed to understand the rising dilemma of Islamophobia, examine the world's perspective, and establish a united response by Muslim nations to tackle the anti-Muslim sentiments. The conference commenced with the speech of His Excellency Ali Muhammad Khan, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Pakistan, he discussed Policy Options for Pakistan to Counter Rising Islamophobia. He stated that it is a very diverse topic and many of its aspects must be covered. To begin with, he mentioned that our Holy Prophet (PBUH) was sent as a blessing not only for Muslims but for the entire humanity, it

is something to ponder that why our religion of peace is now seen as a religion of hatred? The misconceptions spread in the world is because globally there is no practical display of the teachings of Islam. It is important to practically manifesting the true spirit of Islam. He also emphasized that the main role of Muslims is to engage with western countries and people with constructive dialogues. He also highlighted the role of educated youth and its role in spreading awareness about our religion and its values. Engr. Prof. Dr. AtharMahboob, Vice-Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Bahawalpur, highlighted the Systematic Genocide of Muslims around the world and Moral Imperatives. He stated that for Muslims the unchallengeable word is of the Quran, it is important to follow its teachings to be true



Muslims. Muslims should realize and spread that Islam is a religion of accommodation, from the very start our religion teaches us to respect other religions and their places of worship it also protects the rights of non-Muslims. He concluded by emphasizing that Islamophobia has always existed in the west and there needs to be a collective

approach to handle it effectively. Dr. MahboobHussain, Chairman, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of Punjab, Lahore shared his thoughts on the Historical Perspective of Islamophobia: Roots and Causes. He explained the concept and meaning of Islamophobia in detail and

stated that Islamophobia can be defined as an irrational fear of Islam. Its first use is said to be in the 1980s. He highlighted that Islam became a victim of racial prejudice due to its worldwide expansion in a very short period, it challenged the west culturally and politically. He also highlighted the origin of Islamophobia. He also presented an overview of the research that how the Australian public is being bombarded by anti-Islamic news by its media under negative connotations. Dr. MinhasMajeedMarwat, Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar, Peshawar discussed the Role of Muslim Countries and Institutions, Specifically OIC, in Effectively Tackling Islamophobia. She highlighted the role of the Organization of Islamic Council and various steps taken by it. The OIC has been successful in many areas but it has come short vis-à-vis certain challenges. Right from

when it was initiated in 1969, OIC has worked for harmony and stability of the world. Moreover, it has passed various resolutions to take issues of Islamophobia to the institutional level. It also formed an Islamophobia observatory to observe the magnitude of Islamophobia from around the world. It also took the initiative to start a technical body to keep a strict check on blasphemous content worldwide. Dr. Faheem Akhter, Head of Department Management Science and Humanities & Social Sciences, DIIA Suffa University, Karachi discussed, Unpacking Structural Islamophobia: What happens when stereotypes and prejudice go unchecked? Dr. Faheem rightfully pointed out that Islam is a religion of peace, it is the fastest-growing religion in the world and particularly in the west. He also highlighted that after the event of 9/11 more and more peo-

ple started to research and study Islam. Dr. Faheem presented some statistics and stated that a study shows that by 2030 the Muslim population will increase by 35% across the globe. He also mentioned that the west is not particularly afraid of Islam but it is afraid of Muslims. This is the area of concern that we must work on. Muslims have a collective responsibility to remove the tag of terrorists from themselves and spread the true teachings of our religion. He stated that we should get guidance from Holy Quran rather than taking guidance from those who are taking us away from it. The conference was moderated by Mr. Tariq Khattak, Member Board of Experts, CGSS, and was attended by 70 people from various sectors. It was also viewed live on social media platforms by more than 300 viewers.

National Herald Tribune, Thursday, January 28, 2021



Diplomatic News

<https://diplomaticnewspk.blogspot.com/2021/01/cgss-organized-online-conference-on-28.html>

HOME | PAKISTAN | DIPLOMATIC NEWS | AZERBAIJAN | UZBEKISTAN | KYRGYZSTAN | RUSSIA
TURKMENISTAN | KAZAKHSTAN | TRAVEL NEWS | SHOWBIZ | ROMANIA | INDONESIA | UKRA



Women Best Sellers

Home > PAKISTAN > CGSS organized online conference on "Countering Islamophobia: Deconstructing Misconceptions"

CGSS organized online conference on "Countering Islamophobia: Deconstructing Misconceptions"

FARUKH SHEHZAD | January 28, 2021 | PAKISTAN

Facebook | Twitter | Pinterest | LinkedIn | Whatsapp





Urdu Point

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/minister-for-constructive-dialogue-to-counter-1152934.html>



Home Election 2018 Pakistan ▾ Middle East ▾ World ▾ Sports ▾ Business Technology Showbiz ▾ Health

Home » Pakistan » News » Minister for constructive dialogue to counter Islamophobia

Minister For Constructive Dialogue To Counter Islamophobia



14 hours ago Wed 27th January 2021 | 11:58 PM



Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan on Wednesday emphasized the need for engaging Muslims with western countries to spread awareness about Islam among non-Muslims through constructive dialogue to counter Islamophobia



ISLAMABAD, (APP - UrduPoint / Pakistan Point News - 27th Jan, 2021):Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan on Wednesday emphasized the



ANNEXURE 4: VIDEO COVERAGE

CGSS YouTube Channel

The video coverage of the Conference is available on the CGSS YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkbSjoAv3Vw>

