



# THE 500 MOST INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS



2009

FIRST EDITION - 2009



THE  
500 MOST  
INFLUENTIAL  
MUSLIMS IN  
THE WORLD



2009

FIRST EDITION (1M) - 2009

Chief Editors  
*Prof John Esposito and Prof Ibrahim Kalin*

Edited and Prepared by  
*Ed Marques, Usra Ghazi*

Designed by  
*Salam Almoghaby*

Consultants  
*Dr Hamza Abed al Karim Hammad, Siti Sarah Muwahidah*

With thanks to  
*Omar Edaibat, Usma Farman, Dalal Hisham Jebri, Hamza Jilani,  
Szonja Ludvig, Adel Rayan, Mohammad Husni Naghawi and Mosaic Network, UK.*

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**The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center  
for Muslim-Christian Understanding**  
Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service  
Georgetown University  
cmcu.georgetown.edu

# CONTENTS



<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>p.1</b>
<b>THE DIVERSITY OF ISLAM</b>	<b>p.4</b>
<b>TOP 50</b>	<b>p.19</b>
<b>HONORABLE MENTION</b>	<b>p.85</b>
<b>THE LISTS</b>	<b>p.87</b>
<b>LISTS CONTENTS</b>	<b>p.88</b>
1. Scholarly	p.90
2. Political	p.103
3. Administrative	p.112
4. Lineage	p.123
5. Preachers	p.124
6. Women	p.124
7. Youth	p.133
8. Philanthropy	p.135
9. Development	p.137

# CONTENTS

10. Science and Technology	p.148
11. Arts and Culture	p.150
Qur'an Reciters	p.156
12. Media	p.158
13. Radicals	p.163
14. International Islamic Networks	p.165
15. Issues of the Day	p.167
<b>GLOSSARY</b>	<b>p.172</b>
<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>p.175</b>
Muslim Majority Map	p.176
Muslim Population Statistics	p.177
<b>INDEX</b>	<b>p.185</b>
<b>NOTE ON FORMAT</b>	<b>p.198</b>

# INTRODUCTION

The publication you have in your hands is the first of what we hope will be an annual series that provides a window into the movers and shakers of the Muslim world. We have strived to highlight people who are *influential as Muslims*, that is, people whose influence is derived from their practice of Islam or from the fact that they are Muslim. We think that this gives valuable insight into the different ways that Muslims impact the world, and also shows the diversity of how people are living as Muslims today.

Influence is a tricky concept. Its meaning derives from the Latin word *influens* meaning to flow-in, pointing to an old astrological idea that unseen forces (like the moon) affect humanity. The figures on this list have the ability to affect humanity too. In a variety of different ways each person on this list has influence over the lives of a large number of people on the earth. The 50 most influential figures are profiled. Their influence comes from a variety of sources; however they are unified by the fact that they each affect huge swathes of humanity.

We have then broken up the 500 leaders into 15 categories—Scholarly, Political, Administrative, Lineage, Preachers, Women, Youth, Philanthropy, Development, Science and Technology, Arts and Culture, Media, Radicals, International Islamic Networks, and Issues of the Day—to help you understand the different kinds of ways Islam and Muslims impact the world today.

Two composite lists show how influence works in different ways: International Islamic Networks shows people who are at the head of important transnational networks of Muslims, and Issues of the Day highlights individuals whose importance is due to current issues affecting humanity.

## DISCLAIMER AND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Being the first attempt of its kind at a list that shows the broad extent of Muslims' influence on the world we acknowledge that there are likely to be gaps in our categorizing, and are sure that we have missed some influential people. We would like to keep the process as open as possible and ask you to please write in suggestions to [500@rissc.jo](mailto:500@rissc.jo)

## DEMOGRAPHY OF INFLUENCE

Influence in the Muslim world is particular to its context. There is not a clear hierarchy or organized clergy for Muslims to identify a leader, such as a Patriarch for Orthodox Christians or a Pope for Catholics. Islam as a religion is based on the individual's relationship with God, without an intermediary. Influence in the Muslim world is derived from two sources: scholarship, and respect and trust. Scholars are able to educate the masses or give respected opinions, and respected and trusted persons carry the weight of social and historical capital as leaders in their societies.

As you will see, three types of people—monarchs, religious scholars, and leaders of religious networks—dominate the Top 50 list. Monarchs are well represented because of the influence they gain from their political power, the length of time they spend in office, the lineage they derive from the institution of monarchy, and the deeply rooted establishments that they may inherit. Religious scholars are also strongly present in the list because they may be able to make religious rulings, and due to the simple fact that Muslims, of every hue, need figures from which they can source concrete answers to practical questions. In a globalized world, networks of people and of institutions permeate our international society and accordingly have great power because of their ability to affect people's lives, whether it be through funds or services. The Muslim world is no different and leaders of Islamic networks are represented in the top rungs of our list of 500.

The one clear exception to this rule however is Amr Khaled who through sheer force of popularity and innovation—as the Muslim world's first televangelist—exerts tremendous influence as a Muslim. Khaled has been able to chart his own course as a key figure in the Muslim world through the vehicle of mass media, and although as a layperson his religious authority is still somewhat limited he remains the great 'start-up' of the list.

Another important exception is Fethullah Gülen, a preacher, thinker and educator, who having assumed the leadership of a religious movement started by Said Nursî (1878-1960) has gone on to become a global phenomenon in his own right. His popularity and authority in Turkey have been the driving force of the social movement that is widely thought to have brought around the social and eventually political changes of which politician Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been the ultimate heir—that is the enfranchisement of Muslim politics in Turkey.

Geography is also an important issue in terms of influence, with the Middle East and North America and Europe holding disproportionate influence in relation to the quantity of Muslims in these regions. It is important to clarify that individuals from the Middle East have a disproportionate influence in the

Muslim world, due to the fact that the region has many of the oldest and most well-esteemed institutions for Muslims, and most importantly is home to the holy sites in Mecca and Medina. Europe and North America are host to a large proportion of the world's most highly respected educational institutions and draw talented, influential people from around the world, with global outreach through their wealth and high academic standing. Many important international institutions are also based in Europe and North America, which adds to this asymmetry.



# THE DIVERSITY OF ISLAM



<b>I. THE HOUSE OF ISLAM</b>	<b>p.6</b>
The Essence of Islam	p.6
The Canon of Islam	p.8
Islam in History	p.9
<b>II. MAJOR DOCTRINAL DIVISIONS WITHIN ISLAM</b>	<b>p.13</b>
<b>III. MAJOR IDEOLOGICAL DIVISIONS</b>	<b>p.14</b>
III(a). Traditional Islam	p.14
III(b). Islamic Fundamentalism	p.17
III(c). Islamic Modernism	p.17

# I. THE HOUSE OF ISLAM

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(with the exception of President Obama's speech)

The religion of Islam is based on belief in the One God (who in Arabic is called *Allah*). It was founded by the Prophet Muhammad (570-632 CE) in the ancient cities of Mecca and Medina, in the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula (known as the *Hijaz*). God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad the Holy Qur'an, the Sacred Book of Islam. The religion this created, however, was not a new message but simply a final and total Arabic restatement of God's messages to the Hebrew Prophets and to Jesus. The Holy Qur'an says:

*Say ye: we believe in God and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have submitted.* (The Holy Qur'an, 2:136)

Moreover, the Holy Qur'an did not even exclude the possibility of revelations other than those that were given to the Prophets mentioned in the Bible (and thus did not exclude the possibility of other genuine ancient religions other than Judaism, Christianity and Islam). God says, in the Holy Qur'an:

*Verily we have sent Messengers before thee [O Muhammad]. About some of them have we told thee, and about some have we not told thee . . . (40:78).*

*And verily we have raised in every nation a Messenger [proclaiming]: serve God and shun false gods . . . (16:36).*

## THE ESSENCE OF ISLAM

The essence and substance of Islam can be easily summed up by three major principles (which are also successive stages in the spiritual life): *Islam* (meaning 'submission to God's will'); *Iman* (meaning 'faith in God'), and *Ihsan* (meaning 'virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of, God'). The second Caliph, the great 'Umar ibn al Khattab, related that:

*One day when we were sitting [in Medina] with the Messenger of God [the Prophet Muhammad] there came unto us a man whose clothes were of*

*exceeding whiteness and whose hair was of exceeding blackness, nor were there any signs of travel upon him, although none of us knew him. He sat down knee upon knee opposite the Prophet, upon whose thighs he placed the palms of his hands, saying: 'O Muhammad; tell me what is the surrender (Islam)'. The Messenger of God answered him saying: 'The surrender is to testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger, to perform the prayer, bestow the alms, fast Ramadan and make if thou canst, the pilgrimage to the Holy House.' He said, 'Thou hast spoken truly,' and we were amazed that having questioned him he should corroborate him. Then he said: 'Tell me what is faith (Iman)'. He answered: 'To believe in God and His Angels and his Books and His Messengers and the Last Day [the Day of Judgement], and to believe that no good or evil cometh but by His Providence.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' he said, and then: 'Tell me what is excellence (Ihsan).' He answered: 'To worship God as if thou sawest Him, for if Thou seest Him not, yet seeth He thee.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' he said... Then the stranger went away, and I stayed a while after he had gone; and the Prophet said to me: 'O 'Umar, knowest thou the questioner, who he was?' I said, 'God and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'It was Gabriel [the Archangel]. He came unto you to teach you your religion.'<sup>1</sup>*

Thus *Islam* as such consists of 'five pillars': (1) the *Shahadatayn* or the 'testimony of faith' (whose inward meaning is the acknowledgement of God). (2) The five daily prayers (whose inward meaning is the attachment to God). (3) Giving alms or *Zakat*—one-fortieth of one's income and savings annually to the poor and destitute (whose inward meaning is the detachment from the world). (4) Fasting the Holy month of *Ramadan* annually (whose inward meaning is detachment from the body and from the ego). (5) Making the *Hajj* (whose inner meaning is to return to one's true inner heart, the mysterious square, black-shrouded Ka'ba in Mecca being the outward symbol of this heart). Thus also *Iman* as such consists of belief in all the essential doctrines of religion (and the inner meaning of this is that one should not go through the motions of religion and of the five pillars of Islam blindly or robotically, but rather have real faith and certainty in one's heart). Thus, finally, *Ihsan* as such consists in believing that God always sees us, and therefore that one must be virtuous and sincere in all one's actions. In this connection the Prophet said: *'By Him in whose Hand is my Life, none of you believes till he loves for his neighbour what he loves for himself'*.<sup>2</sup> In summary, we could say that the essence of Islam is exactly the Two Commandments upon which Jesus said hangs *all the Law and the Prophets*:

1 *Sahih Muslim*, 'Kitab al Iman', 1, N.I. (The *Hadiths* of the Prophet, like all sacred texts, are written above in italics).

2 *Sahih Muslim*, 'Kitab al Iman', 18, n. 72.

*And Jesus answered him, The first of all commandments is...the Lord our God is one Lord; And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy understanding, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second commandment is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.<sup>3</sup>*

## THE CANON OF ISLAM

Islam does not, like Christianity, have a clergy. There is no temporal or even spiritual institute that holds it together or unifies it. So how did it hold together—and indeed, flourish—for the last fourteen centuries approximately, when its scholars and temporal policymakers keep changing and dying out over time? How did it remain so homogeneous that the Islam of 1900 CE was doctrinally exactly the same as the Islam of 700 CE? Where did its internal checks and balances come from?

The answer is that Islam has a traditional canon:<sup>4</sup> a collection of sacred texts which everyone has agreed are authoritative and definitive, and which 'fix' the *principles* of belief, practice, law, theology and doctrine throughout the ages. All that Muslim scholars (called *ulema* and *muftis* or *sheikhs* and *imams*) have left to do is to interpret these texts and work out their practical applications and details (and the principles of interpretation and elaboration are themselves 'fixed' by these texts), so that in Islam a person is only considered learned to the extent that he can demonstrate his knowledge of these texts. This does not mean that Islam is a religion of limitations for these texts are a vast ocean and their principles can be inwardly worked out almost infinitely in practice. It does mean, however, that Islam is 'fixed' and has certain limits beyond which it will not go. This *is an extremely important concept to understand*, because misunderstanding it, and setting aside the traditional canon of Islam, leads to people killing and assassinating others in the name of religion. The traditional canon of Islam is what protects not just the religion of Islam itself, but the world (including Muslims themselves) from terrorism, murder and oppression in the name of Islam. The canon is Islam's internal check and balance system; it is what safeguards its moderation; it is 'self-censorship' and its ultimate safety feature.

To be more specific, the traditional Sunni Islamic Canon starts with the Qur'an itself; then the great traditional Commentaries upon it (e.g. Tabari; Razi; Zamakhshari/Baydawi; Qurtubi; Jalalayn; Ibn Kathir; Nasafi; and al Wahidi's

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3 The Gospel according to Mark 12:29 –31. (See also Deuteronomy 6:5; and Matthew 22:37- 40).

4 Even the English word 'canon' comes from the Arabic word *kanun* meaning 'law' or 'principle' .

*Asbab al Nuzul*); then the eight traditional collections of *Hadith*, the sayings of the Prophet, (e.g. Muslim; Bukhari; Tirmidhi; Ibn Hanbal, al Nasa'i; al Sijistani; al Darimi and Ibn Maja); the later *Muhaddithin*, or Traditionists (e.g. Bayhaqi; Baghawi; Nawawi and 'Asqalani); then the traditional biographical and historical works of *Sira* (Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd, Waqidi; Azraqi; Tabari; and Suhayli); the *Risala* of al Shafi'i: the *Muwatta'* of Imam Malik; the *Ihya' 'Ulum al Din* of Ghazali; Ash'arite and Maturidian theology; the (original) *'Aqida* of Tahawi; Imam Jazuli's *Dala'il al Khayrat*, and finally—albeit only extrinsically—*Jahiliyya* poetry (as a background reference for the semantic connotations of words in the Arabic language). We give a specific (but not exhaustive) list here in order to minimize the possibility of misunderstanding.

### ISLAM IN HISTORY

It is evidently not possible to do justice to the role of Islam in world history, thought and civilization in a few words, but the following paragraph by Britain's Prince Charles attempts it:

The medieval Islamic world, from Central Asia to the shores of the Atlantic, was a world where scholars and men of learning flourished. But because we have tended to see Islam as the enemy, as an alien culture, society, and system of belief, we have tended to ignore or erase its great relevance to our own history. For example, we have underestimated the importance of eight hundred years of Islamic society and culture in Spain between the 8th and 15th centuries. The contribution of Muslim Spain to the preservation of classical learning during the Dark Ages, and to the first flowerings of the Renaissance, has long been recognized. But Islamic Spain was much more than a mere larder where Hellenistic knowledge was kept for later consumption by the emerging modern Western world. Not only did Muslim Spain gather and preserve the intellectual content of ancient Greek and Roman civilization, it also interpreted and expanded upon that civilization, and made a vital contribution of its own in so many fields of human endeavour—in science, astronomy, mathematics, algebra (itself an Arabic word), law, history, medicine, pharmacology, optics, agriculture, architecture, theology, music. Averroes [Ibn Rushd] and Avenzoar [Ibn Zuhr], like their counterparts Avicenna [Ibn Sina] and Rhazes [Abu Bakr al Razi] in the East, contributed to the study and practice of medicine in ways from which Europe benefited for centuries afterwards.<sup>5</sup>

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5 H.R.H the Prince of Wales, 'Islam and the West', a lecture given at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford on October 27th, 1993, pp.17-18.

On 4 June, 2009, US President Barack Obama said the following at Cairo University:

As a student of history, I also know civilization's debt to Islam. It was Islam—at places like Al Azhar—that carried the light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe's Renaissance and Enlightenment. It was innovation in Muslim communities that developed the order of algebra; our magnetic compass and tools of navigation; our mastery of pens and printing; our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed. Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation. And throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.

I also know that Islam has always been a part of America's story. The first nation to recognize my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty of Tripoli in 1796, our second President, John Adams, wrote, 'The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Muslims.' And since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, they have served in our government, they have stood for civil rights, they have started businesses, they have taught at our universities, they've excelled in our sports arenas, they've won Nobel Prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic Torch. And when the first Muslim American was recently elected to Congress, he took the oath to defend our Constitution using the same Holy Koran that one of our Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson—kept in his personal library.<sup>6</sup>

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6 Barack Obama's speech in Cairo, 'Remarks by the President on a New Beginning' June 4, 2009.

## II. MAJOR DOCTRINAL DIVISIONS WITHIN ISLAM

### MAJOR DOCTRINAL DIVISIONS IN SUNNI ISLAM

#### 1) Ash'ari and Maturidi Schools: Sunni Orthodoxy<sup>1</sup>

These two schools of doctrine are followed by the bulk of Sunni Muslims and differ only in minor details.

**Ash'ari School:** This school is named after the followers of the 9th century scholar **Abu al Hasan al Ash'ari** (874-936 CE) and is widely accepted throughout the Sunni Muslim world. They believe that the characteristics of God are ultimately beyond human comprehension, and trust in the Revelation is essential, although the use of rationality is important.

<sup>1</sup> Orthodoxy in Islam is based on verse 2:285 of the Holy Qur'an, and has been best defined by the historical 2005 international Islamic consensus on the 'three points' of the Amman Message (see: [www.ammannmessage.com](http://www.ammannmessage.com)), these points being:

(a) Whosoever is an adherent to one of the four *Sunni* schools (*Mathahib*) of Islamic jurisprudence (*Hanafi*, *Maliki*, *Shafi'i* and *Hanbali*), the two *Shi'a* schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*Ja'fari* and *Zaydi*), the *Ibadi* school of Islamic jurisprudence and the *Thahiri* school of Islamic jurisprudence, is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible and impermissible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour, and property are inviolable. Moreover, in accordance with the Sheikh Al Azhar's *fatwa*, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to the *Ash'ari* creed or whoever practices real *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) an apostate. Likewise, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to true *Salafi* thought an apostate.

Equally, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in God, Glorified and Exalted be He, and His Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and acknowledges the five pillars of Islam, and does not deny any necessarily self-evident tenet of religion.

(b) There exists more in common between the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence than there is difference between them. The adherents to the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are in agreement as regards the basic principles of Islam. All believe in Allah (God), Glorified and Exalted be He, the One and the Unique; that the Noble Qur'an is the Revealed Word of God; and that our master Muhammad, may blessings and peace be upon him, is a Prophet and Messenger unto all mankind. All are in agreement about the five pillars of Islam: the two testaments of faith (*shahadatayn*); the ritual prayer (*salat*); almsgiving (*zakat*); fasting the month of Ramadan (*sawm*), and the *Hajj* to the sacred house of God (in Mecca). All are also in agreement about the foundations of belief: belief in Allah (God), His angels, His scriptures, His messengers, and in the Day of Judgment, in Divine Providence in good and in evil. Disagreements between the *ulema* (scholars) of the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are only with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (*furu'*) and not as regards the principles and fundamentals (*usul*) [of the religion of Islam]. Disagreement with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (*furu'*) is a mercy. Long ago it was said that variance in opinion among the *ulema* (scholars) 'is a good affair'.

(c) Acknowledgement of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*Mathahib*) within Islam means adhering to a fundamental methodology in the issuance of *fatwas*: no one may issue a *fatwa* without the requisite personal qualifications which each school of Islamic jurisprudence determines [for its own adherents]. No one may issue a *fatwa* without adhering to the methodology of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. No one may claim to do unlimited *Ijtihad* and create a new school of Islamic jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable *fatwas* that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the *sharia* and what has been established in respect of its schools of jurisprudence.

**Maturidi School:** This school is named after the followers of the 9th century scholar **Muhammad Abu Mansur al Maturidi** (853-944 CE) and has a wide following in regions where Hanafi law is practiced. They have a slightly more pronounced reliance on human reason.

## 2) Salafi School

This school was developed around the doctrines of 18th century scholar **Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab** (1703-1792 CE). Salafis have specific doctrinal beliefs, owing to their particular interpretation of Islam, that differentiate them from the majority of Sunnis, such as a literal anthropomorphic interpretation of God. Salafis place a great emphasis on literal interpretation of the Qur'an and *Hadith*, with skepticism towards the role of human reason in theology.

## 3) Mu'tazili School

This school was developed between the 8th and 10th centuries. Although it is traced back to **Wasil ibn Ata** (d. 748 CE) in Basra, theologians **Abu al Hudhayl al 'Allaf** (d. 849 CE) and **Bishr ibn al Mu'tamir** (d. 825 CE) are credited with formalizing its theological stance. Mu'tazili thought relies heavily on logic, including Greek philosophy. Although it no longer has a significant following, a small minority of contemporary intellectuals have sought to revive it. Mutazilites believe that the Qur'an was created as opposed to the Orthodox Sunni view that it is eternal and uncreated. Moreover they advocate using rationalism to understand allegorical readings of the Qur'an.



## II. MAJOR DOCTRINAL DIVISIONS WITHIN ISLAM (CONTINUED)

### IBADI SCHOOL

Ibadis believe that God created the Qur'an at a certain point in time, and that God will not be seen on the Day of Judgment. They also believe in the eternal nature of hell for all those who enter it.

### MAJOR SHI'A THEOLOGICAL POSITIONS

#### 1) The Twelver School

The infallibility (*'Ismah*) of the Twelve Imams descended from the family of the Prophet (*Ahl al Bayt*) who are believed to be the spiritual and rightful political authorities of the Muslim community (*Umma*). The twelfth Imam, the Mahdi, is believed to be in occultation to return in the future.

#### 2) Isma'ili School

The Qur'an and *Hadith* are said to have truths lying with a single living Imam, descended directly from the Prophet. Also known as 'seveners' for their belief that Isma'il ibn Ja'far was the seventh and final leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

#### 3) Zaidi School

The infallibility of the Twelve Imams and the notion of occultation are rejected in favor of accepting the leadership of a living Imam. The Imamate can be held by any descendant of the Prophet (*Sayyid*). Also known as 'fivers' for their belief that Zayd ibn Ali was the fifth and final leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

### III. IDEOLOGICAL DIVISIONS

#### **TRADITIONAL ISLAM (96% OF THE WORLD'S MUSLIMS)**

Also known as Orthodox Islam, this ideology is not politicized and largely based on consensus of correct opinion—thus including the Sunni, Shi'a, and Ibadi branches of practice (and their subgroups) within the fold of Islam, and not groups such as the Druze or the Ahmadiyya, among others.

#### **ISLAMIC MODERNISM (1% OF THE WORLD'S MUSLIMS)**

Emerging from 19th century Ottoman Turkey and Egypt, this subdivision contextualized Islamic ideology for the times—emphasizing the need for religion to evolve with Western advances.

#### **ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM (3% OF THE WORLD'S MUSLIMS)**

This is a highly politicized religious ideology popularized in the 20th century through movements within both the Shi'a and Sunni branches of Islam—characterized by aggressiveness and a reformist attitude toward traditional Islam.

### IIIa. TRADITIONAL ISLAM

#### **SUNNI (90% OF THE WORLD'S TRADITIONAL MUSLIMS)**

The largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Ahl as Sunnah wa'l Jama'h* or 'people of the prophetic tradition and community'—with emphasis on emulating the life of the last Prophet, Muhammad.

#### **SCHOOLS OF ISLAMIC LAW**

##### **Hanafi (45.5%)**

Named after the followers of **Imam Abu Hanifa** (699-767 CE/ 89-157 AH) in Iraq.

##### **Shafi'i (28%)**

Named after the followers of **Imam al Shafi'i** (767-820 CE/ 150-204 AH) in Medina.

##### **Maliki (15%)**

Named after the followers of **Imam Malik** (711-795 CE/ 93-179 AH) in Medina.

##### **Hanbali (2%)**

Named after the followers of **Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal** (780-855 CE/ 164-241 AH) in Iraq.

## IIIa. TRADITIONAL ISLAM (CONTINUED)

### IBADI (0.5% OF THE WORLD'S TRADITIONAL MUSLIMS)

The Ibadi school has origins in and is linked to the Kharijites, but the modern day community is distinct from the 7th century Islamic sect. It was founded after the death of Prophet Muhammad and is currently practiced by a majority of Oman's Muslim population. Also found across parts of Africa.

### SHI'Ā (9.5% OF THE WORLD'S TRADITIONAL MUSLIMS)

The second-largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Shi'atu 'Ali* or 'the party of 'Ali,' the fourth caliph of Islam and first Imam in Shi'ism.

#### BRANCHES

**Twelvers (8%)**  
Named after the followers of **Imam Ja'far al Sadiq** (702-765 CE/83-148 AH) in Medina.

**Isma'ilis (Seveners) (Less than 0.5%)**  
Named after the followers of **Muhammad ibn Ismail** (746-809 CE/128-193 AH) in Medina.

**Zaidis (Fivers) (Less than 1%)**  
Named after the followers of **Imam Zaid ibn 'Ali** (695-740 CE) in Medina.

#### SCHOOLS OF ISLAMIC LAW

##### Usuli

99% of Twelvers. This dominant school favors the use of *ijtihad*, independent legal reasoning, with an emphasis on four accepted collections of *Hadith*. Derive legal opinions from living *ayatollahs*, or *mujtahids*, whose rulings become obligatory. *Taqlid*, the practice of following rulings without questioning the religious authority, is a core tenet of this school. The name Usuli is derived from the Arabic term *usul* meaning 'principle'.

##### Akhbari

Akhbaris reject the use of *ijtihad* or reasoning, and do not follow *marjas* who practice *ijtihad*. They also prohibit exegesis of the Qur'an. Derive legal rulings from the Qur'an, *Hadith*, and consensus. The name Akhbari is derived from the Arabic term *akhbar* meaning 'traditions'. They can trace their roots to the followers of **Muhammad Amin Astarabadi** (d. 1627 CE). Akhbaris continue to exist to this day, although in small, concentrated pockets, particularly around Basra, Iraq.

## IIIa. TRADITIONAL ISLAM (CONTINUED)

### MYSTIC BROTHERHOODS

Although reliable statistics are not available for the millions of Muslims who practice Islamic mysticism, it has been estimated that 25% of adult Sunni Muslims in 1900 CE participated in these brotherhoods as either *murids* (followers of the Sufi guide of a particular order) or *mutabarrikin* (supporters or affiliates of a particular Sufi order).

#### Sunni Orders

##### Naqshbandiyyah

Founded by **Baha al Din Naqshband** (d. 1389 CE) in Bukhara, modern day Uzbekistan. **Influence:** popular from China to North Africa, Europe and America.

##### Qadiriyyah

Founded by Persian scholar and saint '**Abd al Qadir al Jilani** (1077-1166 CE) in Baghdad, Iraq. **Influence:** stretches from Morocco to Malaysia, from Central Asia to South Africa.

##### Tijaniyyah

Founded by the Algerian saint **Ahmad al Tijani** (d. 1815 CE) who settled and taught in Fez, Morocco. **Influence:** major spiritual and religious role in Senegal, Nigeria, Mauritania and much of Sub-Saharan Africa.

##### Shadiliyyah

Founded by the Moroccan saint **Abu'l-Hassan al Shadili** (d. 1258 CE). **Influence:** most influential in North Africa and Egypt.

##### Rifa'iyyah

Founded by **Ahmad ibn 'Ali al Rifa'i** (d. 1182 CE) in southern Iraq. **Influence:** widely practiced across the Muslim world with a strong presence in Egypt.

##### Suhrawardiyyah

Founded by Persian scholar **Abu Najib Suhrawardi** (d. 1168 CE) in Iraq. **Influence:** a strong presence in India.

##### Kubrawiyyah

Founded by **Najm al Din Kubra** (d. 1221 CE) from Khawarzm, modern day Uzbekistan. **Influence:** mostly present across Central Asia.

#### Shi'a Orders

##### Irfan

*Irfan*, which means 'knowing' in Arabic and 'most beautiful and knowledgeable person' in Pashto, is Shi'a mysticism. **Mulla Sadr al Din Muhammad Shirazi** (1571-1636 CE) from Iran is considered a leading theorist of *Irfan* in Shi'a Islam.

##### Mawlawiyyah

A Turkish order founded by the Persian saint and poet **Jalal al Din Rumi** (d. 1273 CE). **Influence:** mainly in Turkey.

##### Chishtiyyah

Founded by the Persian saint **Mu'in al Din Chishti** (d. 1236 CE) Khurasan. **Influence:** highly influential in India.

##### Khalwatiyyah

A Turkish order founded by the Persian saint '**Umar al Khalwati** (d. 1397 CE). **Influence:** wide presence in the Balkans, Syria, Lebanon and North Africa.

##### Yashrutiyyah

Founded by '**Ali Nur al Din al Yashruti** (d. 1892 CE) in Palestine. **Influence:** strong presence in Syria and Lebanon.

##### Badawiyyah

An Egyptian order founded by the Moroccan saint **Ahmad al Badawi** (d. 1276 CE), considered by many as the patron saint of Egypt. **Influence:** active role in Egypt and the Sudan.

## IIIb. ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

### SUNNI

#### MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

The Muslim Brotherhood, or *Al Ikhwan Al Muslimeen* is a transnational Sunni movement, with no particular ideological adherence. It is the largest political opposition organization in many Arab states, particularly in Egypt where it was founded in opposition to colonial rule by **Hassan al Banna** in 1928.

Al Banna originally sought to revive Muslim culture from its position of exploitation under colonial rule, through charitable and educational work, to bring Islam into a central role in people's life. Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966 CE) was also a leading member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 50s and 60s.

#### WAHHABISM/SALAFISM

Wahhabism/Salafism are terms used interchangeably to refer to a particular brand of Islam. Salaf, meaning predecessors, refers to the very early practice of Islam by Muhammad and his immediate successors. Salafism seeks to revive the practice of Islam as it was at the time of Muhammad and can be critical of too much emphasis being placed on thinkers from after this period. **Muhammad ibn 'Abd al Wahhab** (1703-1792 CE) was an important figure in the resurrection of this ideology therefore Salafism is often simply known as Wahhabism.

### SHI'A

#### REVOLUTIONARY SHI'ISM

Revolutionary Shi'ism is an ideology, based on the teachings of the late **Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini** (1902-1989 CE), which shares many similarities with Marxist revolutionary thought. Khomeini believed that the only way to secure independence from colonial or imperial forces was through the creation of a Shi'a state, under the idea of *Velayat-e Faqih* (Guardianship of the Jurist). This means that all politics is subject to the opinion of the Supreme Leader who is responsible for the continued success of the revolution. It is only practiced in Iran.

## IIIc. ISLAMIC MODERNISM

Islamic modernism is a reform movement started by politically-minded urbanites with scant knowledge of traditional Islam. These people had witnessed and studied Western technology and socio-political ideas, and realized that the Islamic world was being left behind technologically by the West and had become too weak to stand up to it. They blamed this weakness on what they saw as 'traditional Islam,' which they thought held them back and was not 'progressive' enough. They thus called for a complete overhaul of Islam, including—or rather in particular—Islamic law (*sharia*) and doctrine (*aqida*). Islamic modernism remains popularly an object of derision and ridicule, and is scorned by traditional Muslims and fundamentalists alike.

# THE TOP 50



1. His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
2. His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
3. His Majesty King Mohammed VI, King of Morocco
4. His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
5. His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
6. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id al Sa'id, Sultan of Oman
7. His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani, Marja of the Hawza, Najaf
8. His Eminence Sheikh Al Azhar Dr Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, Grand Sheikh of the Al Azhar University, Grand Imam of Al Azhar Mosque
9. Sheikh Dr Yusuf Qaradawi, Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars
10. His Eminence Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a, Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt
11. His Eminence Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdullah Aal al Sheikh, Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
12. Mohammad Mahdi Akef, Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood

13. Hodjaefendi Fethullah Güllen, Turkish Muslim Preacher
14. Amr Khaled, Preacher and Social Activist
15. Hajji Mohammed Abd al Wahhab, Ameer of the Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan
16. His Royal Eminence Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III, Sultan of Sokoto
17. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Hezbollah
18. Dr KH Achmad Hasyim Muzadi, Chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia
19. Sheikh Salman al Ouda, Saudi Scholar and Educator
20. His Highness Shah Karim al Hussayni, The Aga Khan IV, 49th Imam of the Ismaili Muslims
21. His Highness Emir Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates
22. His Highness General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces
23. Sheikh Dr M Sa'id Ramadan al Bouti, Leading Islamic Scholar in Syria
24. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam
25. His Eminence Professor Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad al Tayeb, President of Al Azhar University
26. His Eminence Mohammad bin Mohammad al Mansour, Imam of the Zaidi Sect of Shi'a Muslims
27. His Eminence Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani, Leading Scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence, Pakistan
28. His Excellency President Abdullah Gül, President of the Republic of Turkey
29. Sheikh Mohammad Ali al Sabouni, Scholar of *Tafsir*
30. His Eminence Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah, Deputy-Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars
31. Her Eminence Sheikha Munira Qubeysi, Leader of the Qubeysi Movement

32. His Eminence Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse, Leader of Tijaniyya Sufi Order
33. Sheikh al Habib Umar bin Hafiz, Director of Dar al Mustafa, Tarim, Yemen
34. Khaled Mashaal, Leader of Hamas
35. Professor Dr M Din Syamsuddin, Chairman of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia
36. Maulana Mahmood Madani, Secretary General of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, India
37. Sheikh Habib Ali Zain al Abideen al Jifri, Director General of the Tabah Foundation, UAE
38. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson, Founder of Zaytuna Institute, USA
39. His Eminence Sheikh Professor Dr Mustafa Ceric, Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina
40. His Excellency Professor Dr Ekmelledin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference
41. General Mohammad Ali Jafari, Commander of the Revolutionary Guard, Iran
42. Dato' Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, Religious Guide of the Islamic Party of Malaysia
43. Motiur Rahman Nizami, Ameer of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh
44. Professor Sayid Ameen Mian Qaudri, Barelwi Leader and Spiritual Guide
45. His Holiness Dr Syedna Mohammad Burhannuddin Saheb, 52nd Da'i l-Mutlaq of the Dawoodi Bohras
46. Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, Pakistani Nuclear Scientist
47. Professor Dr Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Philosopher
48. Abdullah 'Aa Gym' Gymnastiar, Indonesian Preacher
49. Sheikh Mehmet Nazim Adil al Qubrusi al Haqqani, Leader of Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order
50. His Excellency Dr Abd al Aziz bin Uthman Altwaijiri, Secretary General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



# ADMINISTRATIVE

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

### ALGERIA

#### **GHLAMALLAH, HIS EXCELLENCY BOUABDELLAH**

Ghلامallah is Algeria's long-standing Minister of Waqf and Islamic Affairs, a position he has held since the election of current President Bouteflika in 1999. He previously held high level positions in the Ministry of Education throughout the 1980s and 1990s where he went from focusing on basic education to the organization of Qur'anic schools and religious education. He maintains a strong commitment to France's Algerian Muslim community.

### EGYPT

#### **EL BARADEI, HIS EXCELLENCY DR MOHAMMAD**

El Baradei is the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Before working with the IAEA he was an international lawyer working with the Egyptian diplomatic corps, and a career United Nations professional. His religion and his nationality have given him significant weight when dealing with nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

### IRAN

#### **SHAHRESTANI, SEYYED JAVAD**

Shahrestani is the envoy of Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani in Iran. Many Iranians see Sistani as their *marja*, and therefore pay *khums* (one fifth of their earnings) to him through Shahrestani. Shahrestani is Sistani's son-in-law.

#### **SOBHANI, HIS EMINENCE AYATOLLAH JAFAR**

Sobhani is a leading member of the Council of Mujtahids in the Seminary of Qom; one of the two most important centers of learning in Twelver Shi'ism. He is the director of the Imam Sadiq Institute, Iran. His work in all areas of the Islamic sciences is widely known and receives critical attention. He is a prolific writer having published over 300 scholarly works.

#### **VAEZ-TABASI, HIS EMINENCE AYATOLLAH ABBAS**

Vaez-Tabasi is at the head of Iran's single richest institution, the Holy Estate of Imam Reza. The Holy Estate owns hundreds of companies, and resources. His revenue is supplemented by the donations of the millions of pilgrims that make the journey to Mashhad, where Imam Reza (the eighth of the Twelver Imams) is buried.

### JORDAN

#### **FARHAN, ISHAQ**

Farhan is the leader of the Islamic Action Front (IAF). The IAF is the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan. He is known as a moderate, and was an early advocate of the participation of women in the movement.

#### **HLAYYEL, HIS EXCELLENCY JUSTICE PROF. DR SHEIKH AHMAD**

Hlayyel is the Chief Islamic Justice of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He is also the Imam of the Hashemite Court; former minister of religious affairs, and professor of the Qur'anic sciences.

### LEBANON

#### **DAOUK, AMINE M**

Daouk is the head of the Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut. Makassed is one of the oldest modern Islamic development organizations in Lebanon. It started as an initiative to make

# ADMINISTRATIVE

free education available to girls and has developed into a major Muslim development organization, working on education, health care, and social issues.

## LEBANON

### **JABRI, DR ABDUL-NASSER**

Jabri is the dean of the Islamic College of Da'wa in Beirut. The college is one of the foremost centers for *da'wa* education in Lebanon.

### **NASHABEH, PROF. DR HISHAM**

Nashabeh is the chairman of the Board of Higher Education and the dean of Education at the Makassed Association, Lebanon. He oversees the educational work of all the institutions in the Makassed network. He is also chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Palestine Studies and the director of the Institute of Higher Islamic Studies, both based in Beirut.

## LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

### **AL SHARIF, PROF. DR MUHAMMAD AHMED**

Al Sharif is the secretary general of the World Islamic Call Society (WICS), Tripoli. The WICS is one of the leading organizations working globally to promote the Islamic faith. It has worked largely in Africa, to spread the message of Islam and also for development work there. It is a huge network of organizations with a powerful patron: Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

## MOROCCO

### **BENBIN, PROF. DR AHMAD SHAWQI**

Benbin is the director of the Hasaniyya Library, Morocco. He is an eminent professor, and is globally recognized for his research in the study of Islamic manuscripts. He has published many books and specialized studies.

### **MODGHARI, HIS EXCELLENCY DR ABD AL KABIR**

Modghari is the director of the Casablanca-based Bayt Mal al Quds agency of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which is devoted to safeguarding of the city of Jerusalem, and its religious, architectural and cultural heritage, and also providing development assistance to the Palestinian population and their institutions. He was a former long-term Minister of Waqf and Islamic Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco representing the late King Hassan II.

## OMAN

### **AL KHALILI, HIS EMINENCE SHEIKH AHMAD**

Sheikh al Khalili is the Grand Mufti of Oman. He is head of religious institutions there, and is charged with ensuring that the religious teachings of Oman follow a moderate path. He issues *fatwas* on behalf of Oman's establishment, and represents Oman in Islamic events abroad.

## PALESTINE

### **SABRI, HIS EMINENCE SHEIKH DR IKRIMA SAID**

Sabri is head of the Supreme Islamic Council, and a former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and all of Palestine. He remains an Imam of the Blessed Al Aqsa Mosque, preaching there regularly. He is an important figure who is well respected by many in Palestine for his forthright views on Israel.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **AL RAJHI, SULAIMAN ABDUL AZIZ**

Al Rajhi owns the biggest stake in the world's largest organization for Islamic banking and finance, Al Rajhi Bank, with roughly 60 outlets in Saudi Arabia and more in Malaysia. As Saudi Arabia's richest non-royals, members of the al Rajhi family are among the world's leading philanthropists. They also run the SARR Foundation: a network of charities and research organizations.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## SYRIA

### **ALCHAAR, DR MOHAMMED NEDAL**

Alchaar is the secretary general of the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI). The AAOIFI is an independent international corporate organization supported by its 200 members from 45 countries around the globe which comprise the international Islamic banking and finance industry. It is one of the key organizations creating standards for the Islamic banking industry.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

#### **HENDRICKS, MAULANA IGSHAAN**

Hendricks is the president of the Muslim Judicial Council of Cape Town. The Muslim Judicial Council is one of the central Islamic organizations in South Africa, doing educational work as well as social work for the Muslim community. The organization runs the International Peace University of South Africa (IPSA), and oversees administration of Cape Town's Al Azhar Institute.

## MIDDLE AFRICA

### CHAD

#### **ABAKAR, SHEIKH HUSSAIN HASSAN**

Sheikh Hussain Hassan Abakar is the Imam of the Muslims of Chad and the chairman of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in Chad. He is also a founding member of the Muslim World League (MWL). Abakar oversees the activities of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in implementing educational and cultural programs through Islamic schools, educational books and training courses for Imams. He has been important in fundraising for the education of Muslims in Chad.

## EAST AFRICA

### MALAWI

#### **KING'OMBE, SHEIKH AMAN**

King'ombe is the Spiritual Advisor of the Celebrations of the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad. He is a cleric responsible for the organization of the festivities. The festivities are attended by thousands of Muslims from the around Africa. In 2009 he extended an invitation to the Christian population of Malawi to partake in the festival.

## WEST AFRICA

### MAURITANIA

#### **BAH, PROF. DR MOHAMMED EL MOKHTAR OULD**

Bah is the president of the Chinguetti Modern University, Mauritania. Chinguetti is a UNESCO World Heritage site because of its importance as a center of Islamic learning in the North West coast of Africa. This gives Bah a position with considerable historical and religious capital in West Africa.

### NIGERIA

#### **ADEGBITE, DR LATEEF OLADIMEJI**

Lateef Oladimeji is the acting secretary and legal adviser of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and he co-founded the Muslim Student's Society Nigeria (MSSN) in 1954.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## NIGERIA

### **AJIBOLA, HIS EXCELLENCY PRINCE BOLA**

Prince Bola Ajibola is the former head of the Nigerian High Commission in London and the president and founder of the Islamic Movement for Africa. He also served as the vice chairman of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague between 1991 and 1994. In 1994 he was appointed Judge ad-hoc to the Permanent Court of International Arbitration, with respect to the court's deliberations on the land dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon. He also served as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice in Nigeria. Most recently he founded the Crescent University, in Abeokuta, Nigeria. He is also a senior fellow of the Aal al Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan.

### **ORIRE, JUSTICE ABDULKADIR**

Orire is a key figure in Nigeria. He is the secretary general of the umbrella organization Jama'atu Nasril Islam, which acts as a bridge between the Sufi orders and anti-Sufi population of Nigeria. Orrie is the national chairman of the *Ulema* and advocates for a *sharia*-governed country.

## CARIBBEAN

### JAMAICA

#### **MUHAMMAD, MUSTAFA**

Muhammad has been the president of the Islamic Council of Jamaica for the past 14 years. His work involves education and halal certification. He oversees the eleven mosques in Jamaica. An estimated 5,000 Muslims regularly attend mosques in Jamaica.

#### **TIJANI, MARUFAT**

Tijani is the principal of the Islamiyah Basic School with the Islamic Council of Jamaica. Although it is a one-room school, its role as the only basic school for Muslim-specific education dedicated to teaching Arabic and other basic skills is important.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

#### **ALI, IMAM YACOOB**

Ali is the president of the largest and most influential Muslim organization in Trinidad and Tobago, the Anjuman Sunnat ul Jamaat Association (ASJA) which was founded in 1936. The Muslim community in Trinidad and Tobago is largely comprised of people of Indian descent. His organization runs numerous schools and focuses on the importance of education for Muslim youth.

## CENTRAL AMERICA

### EL SALVADOR

#### **AL SALVADORI, MUSTAFA**

Mustafa Al Salvadori is the president of the Shi'a community in El Salvador. His work, besides that with his own community, has tended to involve education about Islam to the mainly Catholic population of El Salvador who have become fearful of Islam over the past decade.

## SOUTH AMERICA

### ARGENTINA

#### **HALLAR, MUHAMMAD YUSUF**

Hallar is an active figure in Argentina involved in community development for Latino Muslims. He has conducted comprehensive research on the Muslims in Latin America and holds a number of positions including secretary general of the Islamic Organization of Latin America and also director of the Office of Islamic Culture and a member of the Expert Committee on Minority Rights for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## BRAZIL

### **OTHMAN, ABDUL-BAQI SAYED**

Othman is the director of the Charitable Society of Muslims (Sociedad de Beneficiente Muçulmana) of Rio de Janeiro. He has represented Brazilian Muslims in many international conferences. He is also a *da'wa* activist, and runs the IQRA publishing center in Brazil where he helps publish translations of various Islamic books.

### **SAIFI, AHMED**

Saifi is a very active *da'wa* activist in Brazil. He is considered a distinguished member of Al Ikhwan Al Muslimeen. He has been sent to several conferences as the representative of the Brazilian Muslim community.

## ECUADOR

### **SUQUILLO, JUAN**

Suquillo is an imam and the director and co-founder of the Islamic Centre of Ecuador. He has been awarded for his services to the nation, and has translated many books into Spanish. These have become very popular since the 9/11 attacks when non-Muslims became interested in learning about Islam. His books have become bestsellers since then. He is very well respected by South American Muslim scholars.

# ASIA

## BANGLADESH

### **RAHMAN, MOHAMMAD FAZLUR**

Rahman is the leader of the Islamic Foundation Bangladesh. The Islamic Foundation is a quasi-governmental organization working under the ministry of religious affairs in Bangladesh. Its chief aims are educational, and organizational, researching, publishing, offering scholarships and also providing funding to maintain mosques. The head office is in Dhaka, and is supported by six regional offices and 58 district offices. The organization runs seven Imam training centers and 29 centers for *da'wa*.

## INDIA

### **AHMAD, SHEIKH ABOOBACKAR**

Ahmad is the secretary general of the Kerala-based Sunni Cultural Center Markazu Saqafathi Sunniya. He is credited with creating a resurgence in the religiosity of southern India's Muslim population. The center has become one of the more significant educational organizations in Kerala with 40 schools going from primary to university level. There are about 9,000 students at the schools, many of them orphans.

## CHINA

### **GUANGYUAN, IMAM CHEN**

Chen Guangyuan is the Grand Imam of China as well as the president of the Islamic Association of China and the president of the Chinese-Islamic Institute. He has a very important position, with China's roughly 20 million Muslims coming almost exclusively from minority groups.

## CHINA (HONG KONG)

### **ARSHAD, MUFTI MOHAMMAD**

Mohammed Arshad is the chief imam of Hong Kong and the *khateeb* (sermon giver) of the largest mosque in Hong Kong. Arshad keeps good relations with the government, police and foreign consulates. Approximately 50,000 Muslims live in Hong Kong.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## INDONESIA

### **UMAR, DR NASARUDDIN**

Nasaruddin is the director general of religious guidance at the ministry of religious affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. He is also a rector of the Institute for Advanced Qur'anic Studies in Indonesia and secretary general of the Nahdhatul Ulama Consultative Council.

## SINGAPORE

### **IBRAHIM, HIS EXCELLENCY DR YAQOOB**

Ibrahim is the current minister for the Environment and Water Resources and has held the position of minister-in-charge of Muslim affairs since 2002. The lack of tension between Singapore's Muslim and non-Muslim community is testament to the nation's proactive efforts to create a cosmopolitan society. He remains a very active member of the Muslim community; and is a member of the Association of Muslim Professionals.

## UZBEKISTAN

### **ALEMOV, HIS EMINENCE USMAN**

Alemov is the chief mufti of Uzbekistan. He has had this position since 2006. He is respected for his moderate stance and proven record in coping with extremists in the Samarkand region where he was formerly a mufti. He was instrumental in making Tashkent the ISESCO Capital of Islamic Culture for 2007.

## EUROPE

### ALBANIA

#### **KOCI, HAFIZ SABRI**

Sabri Koci is chairman of the Muslim Committee in Albania, which is the country's ruling Islamic body. He spent 27 years in a prison labour camp under the communist rule during which he authored many books about Islam. These works were so inspiring that he was elected as leader of Albanian Muslims after his release.

#### **MUCHA, HAXHI SELIM**

Haxhi Selim Mucha is president of the Islamic Community of Albania and the leader of Muslims there. Albania is one of only a handful of Muslim majority countries in Europe.

### AUSTRIA

#### **BAGHAJATI, AMINA**

Baghajati is the spokesperson for the Austrian Muslim Association (IGGIOe). She was the organizer of the Conference of European Imams working with the Austrian foreign ministry to bring together 130 Muslim leaders from across Europe. The conference ended with a final declaration calling for European Muslims to become more deeply integrated while preserving their identities.

#### **SHAKFEH, ANNAS**

Shakfeh is the head of the Islamic Faith Community in Austria (IGGiOe). He has been president for around a decade, building a close relationship with the Austrian state on community integration. Shakfeh also leads the Islamic Education Authority. In 2008 he was decorated for his services to the Republic of Austria by President Heinz Fischer.

### BELARUS

#### **SHA'ABANOVIC, SHEIKH ABU BAKER**

Belarusian mufti, and head of the Muslim Religious Organization of Belarus. There are about 20 Muslim communities all around Belarus. Sha'abanovic is currently building a mosque in the capital, Minsk.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## BELARUS

### **VORONOVICH, ISMAIL MUKHAREMOVICH**

Voronovich runs the Muslim Spiritual Directorate of Belarus. It is linked to a number of small communities around Belarus, with the largest based at a mosque in Slonim.

## BELGIUM

### **AL YAHYA, DR ABDUL-AZIZ MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH**

Al Yahya is the director of the Islamic Cultural Center in Brussels, Belgium. In 1969, the Islamic Cultural Center in Brussels was founded as an institution housing a mosque, a library, and information service as well as offices. It was funded by the Muslim World League and Saudi Arabia, and hosted the European Council of Mosques for several years. It mainly functioned as an intermediary between the Muslim community and the Belgian state, negotiating the needs and interests of Muslims.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

### **SANKA, VLADIMIR**

Vladimir Sanka is the head of The Islamic Centre in Prague. The Czech Republic is one of the least religious countries in Europe, however Sanka's center bucks this trend, leading the fastest-growing religious community in Prague, and reflecting a larger movement throughout Europe.

## ITALY

### **PALLAVICINI, IMAM YAHYA SERGIO YAHE**

Pallavicini is an important figure in the religious life of Italian Muslims as well as in European relations with the Muslim world. He is vice president of CO.RE.IS (Comunità Religiosa Islamica, the Islamic Religious Community), Italy, the chairman of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West, and an advisor for Islamic affairs to the Italian minister of interior. He is also the imam of the al Wahid Mosque of Milan in Via Meda, where he organizes the training of imams in Italian. His father is Abd Al Wahid Pallavicini, the noted preacher and head of the Ahmadiyyah Idrissiyyah Shadhiliyyah brotherhood in Italy.

## DENMARK

### **PEDERSON, ABDUL WAHID**

Abdul Wahid Pederson is the vice president of Muslims in Dialogue, which promotes Islam within Denmark, the principal of three elementary schools, vice chairman of the Islamic Christian Study Centre, and secretary general of the charity Danish Muslim Aid. He is the first imam to hold Friday sermons in Danish.

## FINLAND

### **DAHER, OKAN**

Okan Daher is the chairman of the Tatar Muslim population of Helsinki. Tatar Muslims have lived in Finland for centuries. He is influential in both community relations with the Christian-majority society of Finland, promoting ways to adapt flexibly while maintaining cultural heritage, and also by promoting relations with the various Tatar communities in Europe.

## FRANCE

### **ABU BAKR, SHEIKH PROF. DALIL**

Abu Bakr is the chairman of the France Supreme Council of the Islamic Religion, and the dean of the Paris Mosque. France has one of the largest populations of Muslims in Europe, and the Paris Mosque is a key feature in the landscape of Islam in the country. The Paris Mosque is also an important intercultural venue for people to learn about Islam.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## ICELAND

### **TAMIMI, SALMANN**

Tamimi is the president of the Muslim Association of Iceland and performed the first Icelandic Muslim marriage in 2009. Tamimi's position makes him high-profile in a country of just of 300,000 people.

## KOSOVO

### **TRNAVA, HIS EMINENCE SHEIKH NAIM**

Naim Trnava is the Grand Mufti of Kosovo. He is the leading religious figure in Kosovo, a new country, which emerged after an ethno-religious war that caused widespread loss of life and destruction. Trnava is a key figure in the attempts of the country's Muslim population to overcome the horrors of war. He was instrumental in the creation of the Inter-Religious Council Organization for Interfaith Relations.

## LITHUANIA

### **JAKUBAUSKAS, ROMAS**

Imam of Kaunas Mosque, Lithuania. Kaunas has the largest population of native Tatar Muslims in Lithuania. Tatar Muslims have been resident in Lithuania for close to 600 years.

## PORTUGAL

### **MUNIR, DAVID**

David Munir has been the imam of the Central Mosque of Lisbon since the age of 23. A key representative of the Muslim community in Lisbon, Munir is involved in interfaith dialogue with members of other Abrahamic faiths present there.

## RUSSIA

### **GAYNUTDINOV, HIS EMINENCE SHEIKH RAVIL ISMAGILOVICH**

Sheikh Ravil Gaynutdinov is a Moscow-based Muslim scholar. Among various academic roles he is Grand Mufti of Russia and chairman of the Union of Muftis of Russia. He is probably the single most important figure in the schema of Russian Islam. He is a key figure in relations between the Kremlin and Russia's Muslim population as a member of the Russian president's Council for Relations with Religious Associations.

## SWEDEN

### **AL DEBE, MAHMOUD JAMIL**

Mahmoud Jamil al Debe is the chairman of the Muslim Association of Sweden and an advocate for the rights of Muslims in Sweden. The Muslim Association of Sweden is the country's largest Muslim organization, which represents around 70,000 Muslims in Sweden. Muslims make up a successful and vocal portion of Sweden's primarily inclusive society.

### **BIN OUDA, HELENA**

Bin Ouda is the chairwoman of the Muslim Council of Sweden. The Muslim Council of Sweden is the main representative body for Muslims living in Sweden. The council is an umbrella organization of a number of Islamic organizations in Sweden. The Muslim Council of Sweden currently has nine member organizations, with a sum total of about 100,000 members from its member organizations.

## TURKEY

### **AYDIN, HIS EXCELLENCY MEHMET**

Aydın is the Turkish minister of state, a primarily administrative government position responsible for relations with Turkey's huge quantity of religious institutions, dealings with Turkish citizens abroad, and relations with the Central Asian republics. He has also held the sensitive position of



# ADMINISTRATIVE

advisor on religious matters to the Turkish National Security Council.

## TURKEY

### **BARDAKOGLU, ALI**

Ali Bardakoglu is the president of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey. He is a moderate Islamic leader who supports interfaith initiatives and in 2005 appointed two women to the position of Vice Mufti. The Presidency of Religious Affairs has significant influence over the activities of religious associations and places of worship in the country. He is former professor of Islamic law at the University of Marmara.

### **ÇAGRICI, HIS EMINENCE PROF. DR MUSTAFA**

Mustafa Çağrııcı is the mufti of Istanbul as well as a theology professor and is a respected figure among Turkish Muslims. He welcomed and prayed with Pope Benedict XVI in the Blue Mosque in 2006.

### **EREN, HIS EXCELLENCY HALIT**

Eren is the director general of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The IRCICA is the leading center for research on the Ottoman Caliphate, and an important center for research on Islamic history. Eren is an expert on minority and non-Arab Muslim communities.

### **GORMEZ, DR MEHMET**

Gormez is the vice president of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) in Turkey. He has attracted a lot of attention recently for a large research project that the Presidency is carrying out to understand the role of *Hadith* in contemporary Turkey. Gormez is in charge of producing a number of major publications for the Diyanet in the field of Qur'anic commentary, Islamic history and the written sources of the Alevi tradition in Turkey.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### **AHSAN, DR MANAZIR**

Ahsan is the director general of the Islamic Foundation, Leicester. The Islamic Foundation is one of the main centers working for integration and understanding of the British Muslim population. Although the center has occasionally been referred to as extremist, it does accurately reflect the diversity of the British Muslim community.

### **ALI, AMJAD**

Ali Amjad is the head of HSBC Amanah UK branch of the HSBC bank. HSBC Amanah UK is Britain's largest provider of *sharia*-compliant financial services. HSBC Amanah UK is HSBC's first venture in Islamic banking outside the Muslim world.

### **EL DIWANY, TAREQ**

El Diwany is a key figure in British Islamic finance circles who wrote *The Problem with Interest*, a key text on the Islamic perspective on banking, in 1997. He is a prominent speaker and continues to be an editor of *islamic-finance.com*, as well as a partner in Zest Advisory LLP, which offers consulting services in Islamic banking.

### **GHAFFUR, TARIQUE**

Ghaffur is a former high-ranking British police officer in London's Metropolitan Police Service. As the UK's highest-ranking Muslim police officer, he often used his high profile position to publicly comment on issues of alleged racism in the Metropolitan Police Service. He has spoken out frequently, blaming discrimination against Muslims as a contributing factor to the incitement of radical Islam.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## OCEANIA

### NEW ZEALAND

#### **KHAN, JAVED**

Khan is president of the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ). His work leading FIANZ has been considerable; building bridges with the government as well as with the broader New Zealand population and leaders of other faiths. He was also recipient of the Queen's Service Medal in 2006.

#### **KIREKA-WHAANGA**

Kireka-Whaanga is the leader of Aotearoa Maori Muslim Association (AMMA); the main organization for New Zealand's Maori Muslims. Islam is an increasingly important religion for the indigenous population of New Zealand, and is the fastest growing religion amongst the Maori community.

## NORTH AMERICA

### CANADA

#### **DELIC, IMAM DR ZIJAD**

Imam Delic is National Executive Director of the Canadian Islamic Congress. The CIC is made up of 24 organizations plus 180 unaffiliated individuals; the CIC's newsletter has 300,000 subscribers worldwide. He is a scholar who writes about how Muslims can integrate into Canadian society, and has been a consultant to the Canadian government and various NGOs. He is the former imam of the British Columbia Muslim Association. The British Columbia Muslim Association represents 57,000 Muslims living in BC.

### UNITED STATES

#### **ALI, MOHAMMAD SHAMSI**

Imam Ali is the imam of three New York City mosques, including at the 96th Street Mosque, the city's largest mosque, and the chairman of the Muslim Day Parade. He works with Muslims from many ethnic backgrounds and is very active in interfaith efforts throughout New York City. Since September 11, 2001 New York's Muslim population have been under close scrutiny, and interfaith activities have been both high-profile, and well supported, giving religious leaders in the city a globally significant role in defusing tensions between religions.

#### **AMR, HADY**

Amr is a very senior policy analyst working on relations with the Muslim world with significant influence over policy debates. He is the founding director of the Brookings Center in Doha, and a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy. He also serves on the World Economic Forum Council of 100 Leaders on Western-Islamic World Relations.

#### **EL ERIAN, DR MOHAMED**

Dr el Erian is the CEO and CIO of PIMCO—one of the world's largest asset management companies. Previously, he served as the investment manager of Harvard University's endowment fund, and deputy director of the International Monetary Fund. He is the bestselling author of a number of books on international economics and finance.

#### **GHAZI, ABIDULLAH**

Ghazi is the creator of the IQRA' Educational Foundation, a non-profit organization that creates Islamic studies textbooks and educational materials especially for children. He developed 'IQRA', the first-ever standardized Islamic-studies test which was piloted in April 2009 in Chicago and is currently being used in 20 countries around the world.

# ADMINISTRATIVE

## UNITED STATES

### **HELMINSKI, SHEIKH KABIR**

Helminski is a sheikh of the Mevlevi Tariqah (an order of Sufism founded by the followers of Rumi). He is an author and translator of books on Sufi poetry; co-director of the Book Foundation; and co-director, along with his wife, of the Threshold Society, which is an NGO dedicated to education about Sufi traditions.

### **KAVAKÇI, PROF. DR HAFIZ YUSUF Z**

Kavakçi is one of America's foremost Islamic educators. Past roles include resident scholar of the Islamic Association of North Texas (IANT); founder and instructor at the IANT Qur'anic Academy; and the founding dean of the Suffa Islamic Seminary, Dallas, Texas, USA. His latest initiative, the Yusuf Ziya Kavakçi Institute, is his most ambitious. The Institute aims to introduce a full system of combined Muslim and secular education to the US from primary to tertiary education, that is able to produce students who are qualified in the social and Islamic sciences and are able to recite the Qur'an.

### **MAGID, IMAM MOHAMED**

Imam Magid is the executive director and imam at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center in Virginia. He is an advocate for youth and women, is the vice president of ISNA, and serves on the FBI's Muslim, Sikh, and Arab Advisory Committee.

### **AL SHABAZZ, ILYASAH**

Al Shabazz, the daughter of Malcolm X, is an author, activist and lecturer who serves as corporation president and trustee of the Malcolm X & Dr Betty Shabazz Memorial, Educational, and Cultural Centre. She has been involved in community service in New York City. Due to Malcolm X's pivotal role in the civil rights movement she enjoys a significant amount of authority among black Muslims.

### **WAHHAJ, SIRAJ**

Siraj Wahhaj is imam of the controversial al Taqwa Mosque in Brooklyn, a prolific lecturer, the leader of the Muslim Alliance in North America, and former vice president of ISNA. In 1991, he became the first Muslim to recite the Opening Prayer of the Qur'an (*Al Fatiha*), at the US House of Representatives.

# LINEAGE

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

### IRAQ

#### **AL SADR, SHEIKH MUQTADA**

Al Sadr is the son of the late Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Mohammad Sadiq al Sadr, and an influential Shi'a political leader. He has gained prominence since the death of Saddam Hussein and created the Mahdi Army in 2003, an armed insurgency movement that has formed its own courts and law enforcement. He promotes a Shi'a-controlled government. Along with Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani he is one of the two most important Shi'a leaders in Iraq. Although there are more qualified Shi'a scholars, Sadr's social and political role make him critically important.

### JORDAN

#### **HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE EL HASSAN BIN TALAL**

Prince El Hassan Bin Talal is an eminent thinker on development and Islam, and has been recognized around the globe for his work, winning a number of awards for his interfaith activities. In addition to his noble lineage and to his being the brother of the late H.M. King Hussein of Jordan, Oxford-educated Prince El Hassan has been one of the leading intellectuals of the Arab world for decades, and one of the pioneers of interfaith dialogue. Among his achievements are: founding the Arab Thought Forum (1981); founding the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies (1994); and being President Emeritus of the World Conference of Religions for Peace (since 2006).

### SUDAN

#### **AL MAHDI, HIS EXCELLENCY IMAM SAYYED AL SADIQ**

Al Mahdi is the president of the moderate Islamic Umma Party, and the Imam of the Sufi order Al Ansar. He was prime minister of Sudan until the government was overthrown. He was forced into exile, but now has returned and is working to restore peace and democracy in the Sudan. He derives a significant portion of his authority from the fact that he descends from his great grandfather Muhammad Ahmad, who claimed to be the *Mahdi*, that is a prophesized figure believed by many Muslims to return to revive the Islamic faith.

## WEST AFRICA

### NIGERIA

#### **BAYERO, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS EMIR AL HAJI DR ADO**

Ado Bayero is the current Emir of Kano. The Emir is the traditional ruler of the Nigerian city of Kano, which is the capital of the current Kano State. Bayero is a popular leader amongst a wide variety of Nigerian Muslims. He is an influential Tijani sheikh, with lineage back to the prominent Fulani jihadist, and religious reformer, Osman Dan Fodio. He is regarded as a wise counselor both at home and abroad because of his experience and ability to mediate between cultures, which makes him an important asset in promoting mutual understanding and resolving conflicts between different ethnic and religious groups.

## EUROPE

### ALBANIA

#### **BARDHI, HIS EMINENCE HAXHI DEDE RESHAT**

Haxhi Dede Reshat Bardhi is the world leader of the Bektashi community, a seven million member strong Sufi order based in Albania. He has been internationally recognized for his active role in interfaith cooperation and encouraging peace in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

# PREACHERS

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

### EGYPT

#### **ABDELKAFY, SHEIKH DR OMAR**

Abdelkafy is an Egyptian preacher and *da'wa* practitioner. He is very well respected by his peers as a *Hafiz al Qur'an* (one who has memorized the entire Qur'an). He is the director of the Qur'anic Studies Centre at the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award in Dubai. As well as working in his native Egypt, he travels abroad to help Muslim communities; working specifically with the Muslim community in Canada

### IRAQ

#### **KUBAISI, SHEIKH DR AHMED**

Kubaisi is a very popular Sunni cleric and preacher in Iraq, who preaches for the end of foreign occupation in Iraq and the institution of an Islamic state. To this end he is a spokesperson of the Sunni Ulema Council, an important association of Sunni Muslim scholars in Iraq. He leads prayers that are televised worldwide from the state mosque of Abu Dhabi.

### ISRAEL

#### **SALAH, SHEIKH RAED**

Raed Salah is the head of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel. He is widely respected in the Islamic world as a spiritual leader. From 1989 to 2001 Salah also served as the mayor of Umm al Fahm, an Israeli-Arab city, before taking on the leadership of the Islamic Movement in Israel.

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **KALBANI, SHEIKH ADIL**

Kalbani was selected by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to lead prayers at the Grand Mosque in Mecca, making him the first black imam there. He is however one of approximately 30 sheikhs appointed to the *Haram*, or sanctuary in Mecca. He has been an imam since 1984, gradually being transferred to larger, more important mosques. He is famous for his excellent recitation of the Qur'an.

### SUDAN

#### **EL BASHIR, HIS EXCELLENCY DR ISSAM**

El Bashir is the secretary general of the International Moderation Centre (IMC) in Kuwait. The IMC is an organization set up by the Higher Committee for the Promotion of Moderation, of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of the State of Kuwait to promote Islamic moderation domestically and around the world. The center has worked with communities in Britain and Russia, among other places, to promote moderation among the extremist elements of their Muslim population. Locally it trains over 700 Imams at a time with a focus on practices of moderation.

#### **AL TURABI, HASSAN ABDALLAH**

Al Turabi is a Sudanese religious leader. He is widely regarded as a moderate and uses Islamic teachings to foster social development. He is an advocate for women's rights, and believes Muslim fundamentalists place prohibitions above social development. He has recently stated that Sudanese president Omar Al Bashir should give himself up to the International Criminal Court for the sake of Sudan.

# PREACHERS

## ASIA

### INDIA

#### NAIK, ZAKIR ABDUL-KARIM

Zakir Abdul-Karim Naik is an Indian public intellectual teaching about Islam. He hosts huge public events where he speaks on Islam, highlighting misconceptions and promoting understanding about Islam. He also challenges leaders in other faiths to public debates that are broadcast around the world on Peace TV—a satellite channel that he helped to found.

## EUROPE

### ITALY

#### PALLAVICINI, SHEIKH ABD AL WAHID

Sheikh Abd al Wahid Pallavicini is a noted preacher from Milan, Italy. After converting to Islam in 1951, he joined the Ahamadiyyah Idrissiyyah Shadhiliyyah Sufi order and is now head of the brotherhood in Italy. His son is Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini, the chairman of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West and imam of the Al Wahid Mosque of Milan.

## NORTH AMERICA

### CANADA

#### BADAWI, DR JAMAL

Dr Jamal Badawi is an Egyptian-Canadian Muslim preacher and highly sought-after speaker on Islam, a prolific writer, interfaith advocate, and activist. He has authored numerous books on Islam and founded the Islamic Information Foundation in Canada.

# INDEX

Country	Name	Page
Afghanistan (4)	Karzai, H.E. President Hamid	107
	Mojaddedi, H.E. Sibghatullah	107
	Samar, Dr Sima	128
	Sarabi, H.E. Dr Habiba	141
Albania (3)	Bardhi, H.E. Haxhi Dede Reshat	123
	Koci, Hafiz Sabri	117
	Mucha, Haxhi Selim	117
Algeria (5)	Bouteflika, H.E. President Abdelaziz	103
	Cherif, H.E. Prof. Dr Mustafa	90
	Ghlamallah, H.E. Bouabdellah	112
	Haddam, Anwar N	103
	Kheddar, Cherifa	126
Angola (1)	Drame, Famar	139
Argentina (2)	Garcia, Professor Muhammad Isa	95
	Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf	115
Australia (6)	Aly, Waleed	100
	Carland, Susan	154
	Debab, Jihad	154
	Houli, Bachar	134
	El Imam, Sheikh Fehmi	100
	El Masri, Hazem	145
Austria (3)	Baghajati, Amina	117
	Dirie, Waris	130
	Shakfeh, Annas	117
Azerbaijan (4)	Aliyev, H.E. President Ilham	107
	Ibrahimoglu, Ilgar	96
	Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Hummat	96
	Qasimov, Alim	151
Bahrain (4)	Al Baharna, Sadiq	133
	Al Mohmood, Prof. Abed al Lateef	90
	Shawqi, Fatima	137
	Yaquby, Nizam	90
Bangladesh (4)	Nizami, Motiur Rahman	80
	Rahman, Mohammad Fazlur	116
	Wazed, H.E. Sheikhha Hasina	129
	Yunus, Dr Mohammad	87, 142, 168
Belarus (3)	Kanapatsky, Ibragim	143
	Sha'abanovic, Sheikh Abu Baker	117
	Voronovich, Ismail Mukharemovich	118
Belgium (3)	Michot, Yahya M	98
	Ozdemir, Mahinur	130, 168
	Al Yahya, Dr Abdulaziz Mohammad Abdullah	118
Bosnia-Herzegovina (2)	Ceric, H.E. Sheikh Prof. Dr Mustafa	78

Country	Name	Page
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Mahmutcehajic, H.E. Prof. Dr Rusmir	144
Brazil (2)	Othman, Abdul Baqi Sayed	116
	Saifi, Ahmed	116
Brunei Darussalam (4)	Haddad, Gibril	96
	Bin Juned, H.E. Dr Ustaz Haji Awang Abd Aziz	96
	Al Mahdali, Abd al Hamid	96
	Waddaulah, H.M. Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkuah Mu'izzaddin	68
Bulgaria (1)	Hadzhi, H.E. Mustafa Alish	144
Burkina Faso (2)	Dokori, Dr Abu Bakr	94
	Aboubakary, Maiga	140
Burundi (1)	Nkunduwiga, Haruna	139
Canada (13)	Ali, Dawud Wharansby	154
	Amir, Amin	154
	Badawi, Dr Jamal	125
	Baksh, Nazim	161
	Delic, Imam Dr Zijad	121
	Doueiri, Dany	145
	K'naan (Kanaan Warsame)	153
	Kutty, Sheikh Ahmad	100
	El Masry, Dr Mohammad	100
	Nawaz, Zarqa	155
	Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz	100
Slimi, Imam Hamid	145	
Chad (3)	Abakar, Sheikh Hussain Hassan	114
	Bichara, Ahmat Ismael	106
	Deby Itno, H.E. President Idriss	106
Chile (1)	Torres, Ismail	95
China (6)	Chengzhi, Zhang	151
	Guangyuan, Imam Chen	116
	Kadeer, Rebiya	129, 169
	Mariah, Mah	142
	Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang)	152
	Yue, Ma	152
China (Hong Kong) (1)	Arshad, Mufti Mohammad	116
Colombia (1)	Al Colombi, Dawood Abdl Ghafur	95
Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) (2)	Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba	140
	Damboli, Sheikh Mohammad	94
Croatia (1)	Alili, Hafiz Aziz	156
Cyprus (1)	Al Haqqani, Sheikh Mehmet Nazim Adil al Qubrusi	83
Czech Republic (1)	Sanka, Vladimir	118
Denmark (5)	Bachiri, Isam	153
	Khader, Nasser	109
	Mojaddedi, Dr Asmat	109
	Pederson, Abdul Wahid	118
	Qadri, Waqas	153
Ecuador (2)	Dassum, Dr Layla	96
Ecuador	Suquillo, Juan	116



Country	Name	Page
Egypt (23)	Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar	124
	Abulmagd, H.E. Prof. Dr Kamal	158
	Akef, Mohammed Mahdi	44, 165
	Abo Auf, Dr Ezzat	150
	Al Awa, Sheikh Dr Mohammed Salim	90
	El Baradei, H.E. Dr Mohammad	112
	Ezzat, Dr Heba Raouf	90
	Goma'a, H.E. Sheikh Dr Ali	40
	Al Halafawi, Jihan	126
	Heikal, Mohammad Hassanein	158
	Hosni, Mostafa	133
	Howeidy, Dr Fahmy	158
	Kahlawi, Prof. Dr 'Abla Mohammed	90
	Khaled, Amr	48
	Masoud, Moez	133
	Mubarak, H.E. President Muhammad Hosni	103
	El Naggar, Zaghloul	148
	Schleifer, Prof. Dr Suleiman Abdallah	158
	Shuqair, Prof. Dr Hasan Jabr Hasan	90
	Tantawi, H.E. Sheikh Al Azhar Dr Muhammad Sayyid	36
	Al Tayeb, H.E. Prof. Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad	70
	Tiblawi, Sheikh Mohammad	156
	El Zayat, Muntasir	103
El Salvador (2)	Qattan, Dr Ahmad	95
	Al Salvadori, Mustafa	115
Estonia (1)	Harsinov, H.E. Ahmed	98
Ethiopia (1)	Idris, H.E. Hajji Omar	94
Finland (3)	Daher, Okan	118
	El Fatatry, Mohamed	149
	Ismail, Atik	144
France (5)	Abu Bakr, Sheikh Prof. Dalil	118
	Bechari, Dr Mohammad	109
	Bencheikh, Sheikh Sohaib	98
	Deghati, Reza	153
	Al Hussayni, H.H. Shah Karim (The Aga Khan)	60
Gambia (1)	Jah, H.E. Amb. Prof. Dr Omar	94
Germany (3)	Hoffmann, H.E. Amb. Dr Murad	99
	Köhler, Ayyub Axel	99
	Rieger, Abu Bakr	144
Ghana (1)	Abass, Mohammed	133
Gibraltar (1)	Sasri, Mohamed	144
Guyana (2)	Khan, Faizul	141
	Shah, Ryhaan	151
Iceland (1)	Tamimi, Salmann	119
India (10)	Ahmad, Sheikh Aboobackar	116
	Burhannuddin Saheb, H.H. Dr Syedna Mohammad	81

Country	Name	Page
India	Engineer, Asghar Ali	96
	Kalam, H.E. Dr A P J Abdul	148
	Khan, Shahrukh	152
	Khan, Wahiduddin	96
	Madani, Maulana Mahmood	77
	Naik, Zakir Abdul-Karim	125
	Qaudri, Prof. Sayid Ameen Mian	81
	Rahman, Allah Rakha	152
Indonesia (15)	Alawiyaah, Prof. Dr Tuti	129
	Anwar, Syafi'i	142
	Azra, Azyumardi	97
	Bagir, Haidar	159
	Gymnastiar, Abdullah	83
	Maarif, Syafii	97
	Mulia, Siti Musdah	129
	Munir, Lily Zakiyah	129
	Muzadi, Dr Kh Achmad Hasyim	56
	Rosa, Helvy Tiana	152
	Syamsuddin, Prof. Dr M Din	76
	Ulfah, Hajjah Maria	129, 156
	Umar, Dr Nasaruddin	117
	Wahid, H.E. Abd al Rahman (Gus Dur)	107
	Yudhoyono, H.E. President Susilo Bambang	108
Iran (25)	Abedini, Reza	150
	Aghazadeh, Gholam Reza	148, 167
	Ahmadinejad, H.E. President Mahmoud	103
	Amoli, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi	91
	Damad, H.E. Ayatollah Prof. Dr Seyyed Mostafa Mohaghegh	91
	Ebadi, Shirin	126
	Ebtekar, H.E. Dr Masoumeh	126
	Gholshani, Dr Mehdi	148
	Hashemi, Faezeh	126
	Jafari, Gen. Mohammad Ali	79
	Jalili, Saeed	103
	Khamenei, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali	24
	Khatami, H.E. Mohammad	104
	Montazeri, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali	104
	Mousavi, H.E. Mir-Hossein	104
	Nazeri, Shahram	150
	Rafsanjani, H.E. Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi	104
	Rahnavard, Zahra	126
	Shahrestani, Seyyed Javad	112
	Shirazi, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim	91
	Sobhani, H.E. Ayatollah Jafar	112
	Soroush, Abdolkarim	91

Country	Name	Page
Iran	Taskhiri, H.E. Ayatollah Mohammad-Ali	104
	Vaez-Tabasi, H.E. Ayatollah Abbas	112
	Yazdi, H.E. Ayatollah Mohammad Taghi Mesbah	91
Iraq (11)	Al Baghdadi, Abbas Shakir Al Fattal	150
	Dari, Harith	104
	Fayyadh, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq	86, 90
	Hakim, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Said	91
	Al Khoei, Sayyed Jawad	135
	Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmad	124
	Najafi, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Ali	91
	Odhaib, Madeeha Hasan	137
	Al Sadr, H.E. Ayatollah Al Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail	92
	Al Sadr, Sheikh Muqtada	122
	Sistani, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Husseini	34, 166
Israel (1)	Salah, Sheikh Raed	124
Italy (2)	Pallavicini, Sheikh abd al Wahid	125
	Pallavicini, Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe	118
Jamaica (2)	Muhammad, Mustafa	115
	Tijani, Marufat	115
Jordan (10)	Al Abbadi, H.E. Abdul Salam	92, 165
	Farhan, Ishaq	112
	H.R.H. Prince El Hassan Bin Talal	123
	Al Hussein, H.M. King Abdullah II	28
	Hlayyel, H.E. Justice Prof. Dr Sheikh Ahmad	112
	Al Meheid, Minwer	150
	Al Qudah, H.E. Sheikh Dr Nuh Ali Salman	92
	H.M. Queen Rania Al Abdullah	127
	Abu Rashta, Ata	165
Al Saqqaf, Sheikh Seyyed Hasan	92	
Kenya (1)	Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed	139
Kosovo (2)	Thachi, H.E. President Hashim	109
	Trnava, H.E. Sheikh Naim	119
Kuwait (7)	Al Afasy, Sheikh Mishary Bin Rashid	156
	Al Ghoneim, H.E. Prof. Dr Abdullah Yusuf	137
	Al Kharafi, Nasser	135
	Al Mutawa, Jassem	158
	Al Mutawa, Dr Naif	158
	Al Shamlan, Prof. Dr Ali Abdullah	148
Sweidan, Sheikh Dr Tariq	87, 158	
Latvia (1)	Uldis, Berzins	153
Lebanon (10)	Assaf, Roger	150
	Daouk, Amine M	112
	Fadlallah, H.E. Grand Ayatollah Sayeed Mohammad Hussein	92
	Fahs, Sheikh Seyyed Hani	137
	Hariri, H.E. Saad Rafic	104
	Jabri, Dr Abdul-Nasser	113
	Nashabeh, Prof. Dr Hisham	113

Country	Name	Page
Lebanon	Nasrallah, Seyyed Hasan	54, 166
	Qabbani, H.E. Dr Mohammad Rashid	92
	Al Sadr, Rabab	137
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (4)	Gaddafi, H.E. Col. Muammar	105
	Al Gaddafi, H.E. Saif al Islam Muammar	137
	Nayed, Prof. Dr Aref Ali	92
	Al Sharif, Prof. Dr Muhammad Ahmed	113
Lithuania (1)	Jakubauskas, Romas	119
Malawi (2)	Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala	139
	King'ombe, Sheikh Aman	114
Malaysia (9)	Aljeffri, Sharifah Zuriah	129
	Anwar, Zaynah	129
	Bakar, Prof. Dato Dr Osman	97
	Ibrahim, H.E. Dr Anwar	86, 107
	Kader, Mohideen Abdul	142
	Kamali, Prof. Dr Mohammad Hashim	97
	Mohammad, H.E. Dr Mahathir	108
	Nik Mat, Dato Haji Nik Abdul Aziz	80
Raihan	152	
Mali (2)	Keita, Salif	151
	Touré, H.E. President Amadou Toumani	106
Mauritania (3)	Bah, Prof. Dr Mohammed el Mokhtar Ould	114
	Bin Bayyah, H.E. Sheikh Abdullah	74
	El Mokhtar, Aminetou	128
Mexico (2)	Rojas, Isa	95
	Weston, Omar	141
Morocco (11)	Abdul-Rahman, Dr Taha	92
	Altwaijiri, H.E. Dr Abd al Aziz bin Uthman	84
	Azzouzi, Prof. Dr Abdelhaq	93
	Benbin, Prof. Dr Ahmad Shawqi	113
	Buhairi, Muhammad Ahmad	150
	Mernissi, Fatema	126
	Modghari, H.E. Dr Abd al Kabir	113
	Mohammed VI, H.M. King	26
	Al Murini, Dr al Jilani	93
	Yassine, Nadia	127
Zitan, Naima	127	
Mozambique (1)	Cheba, Sheik Muhamade Aboulai	140
Netherlands (4)	Benali, Abdelkader	153
	Dami, Abdellah	160
	Mirza, Umar	160
	El Mouhandiz, Rajae	153
New Zealand (2)	Khan, Javed	121
	Kireka-Whaanga	121
Niger (1)	Mindaoudou, H.E. Dodo Aïchatou	128
Nigeria (7)	Abubakar III, H.R.E. Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu	52

Country	Name	Page
Nigeria	Adegbite, Dr Lateef Oladimeji	114
	Ajibola, H.E. Prince Bola	115
	Ashafa, Imam Muhammad	140
	Bayero, H.R.H. Emir al Haji Dr Ado	123
	Orire, Justice Abdulkadir	115
	Yar'adua, H.E. President Umaru Musa	107
Oman (2)	Al Khalili, H.E. Sheikh Ahmad	113
	Al Said, H.M. Sultan Qaboos Bin Said	32
Pakistan (16)	Ahmad, Dr Israr	97
	Ahmad, Salman	152
	Ahsan, Barrister Chaudhry Aitzaz	108
	Ansari, Zafar Ishaq	97
	Bibi, Mukhtaran	130
	Rahman, Atta-Ur	98
	Chaudry, Chief Justice Iftikhar M.	142
	Edhi, Abdul Sattar	142
	Kayani, Gen. Ashfaq	108
	Khan, Dr Abdul Qadeer	82
	Lodi, H.E. Amb. Dr Maleeha	130
	Naim, Tanveer Kausar	130
	Al Qadri, Dr Muhammad Tahir	87, 142
	Usmani, H.E. Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi	72
Abd al Wahhab, Hajji Mohammed	50, 166	
Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto	133	
Palestine (West Bank / Gaza) (10)	Abbas, H.E. President Mahmoud	105
	Abu Awwad, Ali	137
	Abu Elaish, Dr Izzeldin	138
	El Faqeeh, Khouloud	127
	Haniyah, Ismail	105, 168
	Khanfar, Waddah	159
	Kuttab, Daoud	159
	Mashaal, Khaled	76
	Sabri, H.E. Sheikh Dr Ikrima Said	113
Al Tamimi, H.E. Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab	93	
Philippines (4)	Abubakar, Ismael	143
	Askalani, Gen. Muhammad Nur	143
	Misuari, Nur	108
	Rasul-Bernando, Amina	143
Portugal (1)	Munir, David	119
Qatar (5)	H.E. Sheikha Aisha Bint Faleh Bin Nasser Al Thani	138
	H.E. Sheikha Mayassa Bint Hamad Al Thani	138
	Al Missned, H.H. Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser	127
	Al Qaradawi, Dr Yusuf	38
	Younis, Ahmed	169
Russia (5)	Gaynutdinov, H.E. Sheikh Ravil Ismagilovich	119
	Kadyrov, H.E. President Ramzan	110
	Shaimiev, H.E. President Mintimer	109

Country	Name	Page
Russia	Umarov, Dokka	110
	Yevloyev, Akhmed	110
Saudi Arabia (24)	Abu Sulayman, Muna	127
	Al Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmed Ali	156
	Bin Laden, Bakr	138
	Al Faiz, Norah Abdallah	127
	Al Faisal, H.R.H Prince Mohammed	135
	Al Ghamdi, Sheikh Sa'd Ibn Sa'id	156
	Al Huwaider, Wajeha	127
	Kalbani, Sheikh Adil	124
	Kreidie, Dr Samir	135
	Al Madani, H.E. Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali	135
	Al Mu'ayqali, Sheikh Maahir Bin Hamad	157
	Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed	138
	Olayan, Lubna	128
	Al Ouda, Sheikh Salman	58
	Al Qarni, Dr Aaidh	93
	Al Rajhi, Sulaiman Abdul Aziz	113
	Al Saffar, Sheikh Hasan Musa	93
	Al Saud, H.R.H. King Abdullah bin 'Abd al 'Aziz	20-21
	Al Saud, H.R.H Prince al Waleed bin Talal bin Abdul Aziz	135
	Al Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr	157
	Al Sheikh, H.E. Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdullah Aal	42
	Al Shugairi, Ahmad	133
	Al Shuraim, Sheikh Abu Ibrahim Sa'ud Ibn Muhammad	157
	Al Sudais, Sheikh Abdul Rahman	157
Senegal (2)	Cisse, H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali	75
	N'dour, Youssou	150
Singapore (7)	Jalil, Iskandar	152
	Kassim, Ustaz Ibrahim	98
	Lazim, Razak Mohamed	134
	Nassir, Mohammed	134
	Rasheed, H.E. Zainul Abidin	108
	Salleh, Maarof	98
Ibrahim, H.E. Dr Yaqoob	117	
Somalia (4)	Ahmed, H.E. President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh	106
	Aweys, Sheikh Hassan Dahir	106
	Elmi, Asha Haji	140
	Osman, Hibaaq	128
South Africa (12)	Amla, Hashim	151
	Bhika, Zain	151
	Cajee, Zeinoul Abedien	140
	Esack, Prof. Farid	94, 167
	Haffajee, Ferial	159
	Hendricks, Maulana Igshaan	114
	Hendricks, Sheikh Seraj	95
	Jeenah, Naeem	141

Country	Name	Page
South Africa	Moosa, Professor Ebrahim	95
	Morton, Shafiq	159
	Patel, Ebrahim	141, 169
	Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail	141
Spain (1)	Escudero, Dr Mansur A	144
Sudan (6)	El Bashir, H.E. Dr Issam	124
	Al Bashir, H.E. President Omar	105
	Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed 'Mo'	138
	Al Mahdi, H.E. Imam Sayyed al Sadiq	87, 123
	Osman, Salih Mahmoud	138
	Al Turabi, Hassan Abdallah	124
Sweden (2)	Al Debe, Mahmoud Jamil	119
	Bin Ouda, Helena	119
Switzerland (1)	Ramadan, Tariq	87, 99
Syria (9)	Alchaar, Dr Mohammed Nedal	114
	Al Assad, H.E. President Bashar	105
	Al Bizm, H.E. Dr Abdul-Fattah	93
	Bugha, Mustafa	93
	Al Bouti, Sheikh M Sa'id Ramadan	66
	Dayeh, Kawkab Al Sabah Mohammad Jamil	148
	Hassoun, H.E. Sheikh Dr Ahmad Badr al Din	86, 93
	Al Sabouni, Sheikh Mohammed Ali	73
	Qubeysi, H.E. Sheikha Munira	74
Thailand (3)	Langputeh, Dr Sukree	143
	Pitsuwan, H.E. Dr Surin	109
	Sabur, M Abdus	143
Trinidad and Tobago (1)	Ali, Imam Yacoob	114
Tunisia (3)	Baccouche, H.E. Prof. Dr Hedi	105
	Ennaifer, H'mida	94
	Ghannoushi, Rachid	105
Turkey (20)	Aydin, H.E. Mehmet	119
	Bardakoglu, Ali	120
	Benli, Fatma	144
	Bulaç, Ali	160
	Çagırcı, H.E. Prof. Dr Mustafa	120
	Davutoglu, H.E. Ahmet	110
	Dumanlı, Ekrem	160
	Erbakan, H.E. Prof. Necmettin	110
	Erdogan, H.E. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip	30
	Eren, H.E. Halit	120
	Gormez, Dr Mehmet	120
	Gül, H.E. President Abdullah	73
	Gül, Hayrünnisa	130
	Gülen, Hodjaefendi Fethullah	46, 166
	Ihsanoglu, H.E. Prof. Dr Ekmelledin	79
	Karaman, Prof. Dr Hayrettin	99

Country	Name	Page
Turkey	Sezgin, Prof. Dr Fuat	99
	Yahya, Harun	149
	Yalçın, Rabia	153
Turkmenistan (1)	Berdimuhamedow, H.E. President Gurbanguly Mälikgulyýewiç	108
Uganda (1)	Mamdani, Mahmood	94
United Arab Emirates (9)	Al Abbar, Mohammed bin Ali	139
	H.R.H. Princess Haya bint al Hussein	128
	Al Mahmoudi, Hussein Mohammad	139
	Al Jifri, Sheikh Habib 'Ali Zain al Abideen	77
	Al Maktoum, H.H. Emir Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid	62
	Al Nahyan, H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed	106
	Al Nahyan, H.H. Gen. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed	64
	Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal	159
	Al Rostamani, Dr Amina	159
United Kingdom (32)	Ahmed, Baron Nazir	110
	Ahsan, Dr Manazir	120
	Ali, Amjad	120
	Ali, Dr Anas al Shaikh	110
	Ali, Mockbul	110
	Ali, Rana	149
	Alibhai-Brown, Yasmin	160
	Baig, Anila	160
	Atwan, Abdel Bari	160
	Azmi, Waqar	144
	Azzam, Khaled	153
	Al Banna, Dr Hany	145
	El Diwany, Tareq	120
	Ghaffur, Tarique	120
	Imran, Mohammed	134
	Islam, Yusuf	87, 153
	Janmohamed, Shelina Zahra	131
	Joseph, Sarah	160
	Khalid, Fazlun	149
	Khan, Irene Zubaida	131
	Khan, Rizwan	160
	Malik, Shahid	110
	Nahdi, Fuad	161
	Omaar, Rageh	161
	Qureshi, Khawar	99
	Sanders, Peter	154
	Sardar, Ziauddin	161
	Shah-Kazemi, Dr Reza	99
	Warsi, Lady Sayeeda	111
	Winter, Timothy (Sheikh Abdul-Hakim Murad)	87, 100
	Yusuf, Sami	154
	United States (71)	Abdullah, Umar Faruq



Country	Name	Page
United States	Abdul-Rashid, Imam Talib	145
	Abdur-Rauf, Feisal	145
	Abou el Fadl, Dr Khaled	101
	Ahmed, H.E. Amb. Akbar Salahuddin	101
	Ali, Baba	134
	Ali, Mohammad Shamsi	121
	Al Alwani, Dr Taha Jaber	101
	Amanat, Omar	161
	Amanullah, Shahed	161
	Amr, Hady	121
	Assilmi, Amina	131
	Awad, Nihad	145
	Ayoub, Dr Mahmoud	101
	Cader, Rushdi Abdul	146
	Canon, Anas	161
	Chakaki, Mohamad	149
	Chappelle, Dave	155
	Cheema, Dr Tariq H	136
	Clay, Mohammad Ali	146
	Delorenzo, Sheikh Yusuf Talal	101
	Ellison, Rep. Keith	86, 101
	Al Erian, Dr Mohamed	121
	Estes, Sheikh Yusuf	101
	Ghazi, Abidullah	121
	Godlas, Dr Alan	161
	Gouverneur, Aisha	161
	Hammad, Suheir	155
	Hanson, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf	78
	Helminski, Sheikh Kabir	122
	El Hibri, Fuad	149
	Hussain, Rashad	111
	Idriss, Shamil	146
	Al Islam, Amir	101
	Jackson, Sherman	102
	Kabbani, Sheikh Muhammad Hisham	101
	Kavakçı, Prof. Dr Hafiz Yusuf Z	122
	Kavakçı, Prof. Dr Merve	131
	Keller, Sheikh Nuh	102
	Khan, Mansur	146
	Khera, Farhana	146
	Latif, Imam Khalid	146
	Lekovic, Edina	162
Magid, Imam Mohamed	122	
Al Marayati, Salam	146	
Mattson, Ingrid	87, 131	
Memon, Javed	155	
Mogahed, Dalia	131	

Country	Name	Page
United States	Mos Def	155
	Nashashibi, Rami	146
	Nasr, Prof. Dr Seyyed Hossein	82, 167
	Niaz, Robina	132
	Nyang, Sulayman S	102
	Omar, Manal	147
	Oz, Dr Mehmet	149
	Pandith, Farah	169
	Patel, Dr Eboo	134
	Riaz, Dr Khalid	147
	Sachedina, Professor Abdulaziz	102
	Al Shabazz, Ilyasah	122
	Shakir, Imam Zaid	102
	Siddiqui, Prof. Dr Muzammil H	102
	Sulaiman, Amir	155
	Taylor, Tayyibah	162
	Usman, Azhar	155
	Wadud, Prof. Dr Amina	132
	Wahhaj, Siraj	122
	Wolfe, Michael	162
Zakaria, Fareed	162	
Zakariya, Mohamed	155	
Zewail, Ahmed	149	
Uzbekistan (2)	Alemov, H.E. Usman	117
	Yusuf, H.E. Sheikh Muhammad Sodiq Mohammad	98
Yemen (4)	Bin Hafiz, Sheikh al Habib Umar	75
	Baobaid, Mohammad Baobaid	139
	Houthi, Abdul-Malik	168
	Al Mansour, H.E. Mohammad Bin Mohammad	72
<b>RADICALS</b>		
Country	Name	Page
Afghanistan	Hekmatyar, Gulbuddin	163
	Omar, Mullah Muhammad	163
Egypt	Al Zawahiri, Ayman	163
Indian-Administered Kashmir	Azhar, Maulana Masood	164
Indonesia	Bashir, Abu Bakar	164
Iraq	Al Baghdadi, Abu Omar	163
Pakistan	Mehsud, Baitullah	164
	Saeed, Hafiz Mohammad	164
Palestine	Al Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad Asem	164
Saudi Arabia	Al Hawali, Safar Bin Abdul-Rahman	163
	Al Madkhali, Sheikh Rabi' Ibn Haadi 'Umayr	163
	Bin Laden, Osama	163



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