

THE KEY TO PEACE

GLOBAL UNITY



Historic Address by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community delivered at the '*Responding to the Challenge of Extremism – A Message of Peace*' conference held at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium on 4th December 2012.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organisation, with branches in more than 200 countries. It is the most dynamic denomination of Islam in modern history, with an estimated membership of one hundred and sixty million worldwide.

It was established by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) in 1889 in a small and remote village called Qadian in Punjab, India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days and the awaited one of the world Community of religions (the *Mahdi* and Messiah of the latter days). The Community he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam in its pristine purity that promotes peace and universal brotherhood based on a belief in the Gracious and Ever-Merciful God.

With this conviction, within a century, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has expanded globally and it endeavours to practice the peaceful teachings of Islam by raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for charities, building schools and hospitals open to all and by encouraging learning through interfaith dialogue.

The UK chapter of the Community was established in 1913 and in 1924 it built London's first purpose built mosque (in Putney). It is therefore one of the oldest and most established Muslim organisations in Britain and now has more than 100 branches across Britain.

The Khalifa of Islam – A Man of Peace

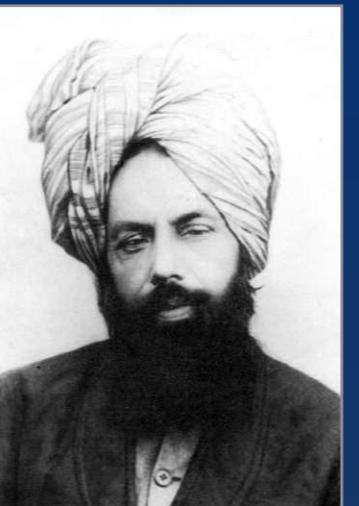
Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad was elected as the fifth Khalifa of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 2003.

His life has been a reflection of dedication, steadfastness, prayer and success. His bond with God leads him to urge his community never to forget the Almighty and never to despair. His focus on prayer is evident for all to see and the fruits of the success of such prayer bear testament to his faith. His sympathy for mankind drives him and his community to serve humanity in the same spirit that the early Muslims served the poor and the needy. His sense of sacrifice mirrors the spirit of sacrifice integral to Islam. Indeed his very life and mission reflect a pure spirit that is ever wary of its responsibilities and ever vigilant for the honour of Islam, its Prophet^(sa) and the prophet of the latter days.

"His Holiness eloquently and persistently returns to these themes of peace and tolerance love and understanding among the followers of different faiths..."

...We desperately need the moral leadership and guidance that we can look for to His Holiness to provide..."
(Lord Avebury on Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad)

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community stands at one with the Khalifa in the remembrance of God and service of mankind.



**Hazrat Mirza
Ghulam Ahmad
(The Promised Messiah
and Mahdi)
(peace be upon him)**



**Hazrat Mirza Masroor
Ahmad – Head of the
worldwide Ahmadiyya
Muslim Community**

Introduction

On 3rd and 4th December 2012, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, the worldwide Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, made his first visit to the European Parliament in Brussels where he delivered an historic keynote address to a packed audience of more than 350 guests representing 30 countries. The event was entitled 'Responding to the Challenge of Extremism: A Message of Peace'. The event was hosted by the newly launched European Parliament "Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims" Group, chaired by Dr Charles Tannock MEP. This is a cross-party and pan-European group of MEPs that has been set up to promote in the European Parliament the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and advance their interests in Europe and the rest of the world. During the visit, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba} also had a number of meetings with parliamentarians and dignitaries, a short gist of which is presented below.

Dr Charles Tannock MEP (UK) (*Member of the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, Member of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims Group*). Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba} spoke about the persecution faced by Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan. His Holiness said that each month Ahmadi Muslims were being brutally martyred in Pakistan. Charles Tannock MEP said he would continue to support the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in all respects. He said that earlier in the day he had met with the Pakistani Foreign Minister and questioned her directly about the persecution faced by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. His Holiness said that a key principle of humanity was that human beings should always be willing to help all those who are deprived.

Tunne Kelam MEP (Estonia) (*Member of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, the Sub-Committee on Security and Defence and Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims Group*). He said that the visit of Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad to the European Parliament was "very important because it will enrich our understanding". Tunne Kelam briefed His Holiness about the political situation in his native Estonia. His Holiness said he was pleased to learn that Estonia had emerged from the difficulties of its past and now had a stable Government.

Claude Moraes MEP (UK) (*Vice-Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the Arab Peninsula, Member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, Deputy Leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party and Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims Group*). Claude Moraes MEP, who also hosted a lunch for His Holiness, spoke of his honour at meeting Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}. He said that the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was a "great leader who stood out from other religious leaders."

Claude Moraes said that His Holiness was particularly welcome at the European Parliament because he brought with him a message of peace and tolerance.

Barbara Lochbihler MEP (Germany) (*Chair of the European Parliament Sub-Committee on Human Rights*). Barbara expressed concern at the persecution of Ahmadi Muslims internationally and offered to relay the message of His Holiness to the sub-committee as well.

Jean Lambert MEP (UK) (*Chair of the European Parliament South Asia Delegation*) and **Phil Bennion MEP (UK)** (*Member of the European Parliament South Asia Delegation and Chairman of the LibDem European Group*). Both MEPs briefed His Holiness about their recent official visit to Pakistan. They pledged to help Ahmadi Muslims who were being persecuted. His Holiness said an effort should be made to stop innocent children being radicalised in Pakistan and that many of the so-called Madrassas were not fulfilling their roles to provide religious education; rather they were indoctrinating children with extremist ideologies. His Holiness said, "Without a proper education people can be easily influenced and indoctrinated."

Marina Yannakoudakis MEP (UK) said she had always admired the Ahmadiyya Community's motto of "Love for All, Hatred for None." In reply, His Holiness said, "This is a message for the entire world."

Mr Billy Taranger (Christian Folk Party Norway) and Ms Ann Katherine Skgorshammer MP (Christian Folk Party Norway). Billy Taranger spoke of his admiration for Ahmadi Muslims. In response His Holiness said that all good and sensible people would support the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's message of love, peace and harmony. They also said they had visited the new Ahmadiyya Mosque in Oslo and that it was a source of pride for the Norwegian people.

Ingrid Norstein (Norway): Ingrid spoke of her “delight” at meeting His Holiness. She said she had very good relations with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Norway and had recently read a lot about the community. Ingrid asked His Holiness how the Government of Norway could help the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. His Holiness responded by saying that Ahmadi Muslims believed that all citizens should have equal rights but Ahmadi Muslims were denied the right to vote in Pakistan due to unjust legislation and the Norwegian Government should work towards making sure all groups have the right to vote.

José María Alonso Ruiz (Spanish National Parliament Member from Cantabria – Santander, Political Party: Partido Popular (Popular Party, currently the ruling party of Spain), **Pedro Luis Sanz Carlavilla** (Mayor of Meco - a Town in Madrid Political Party: Partido Popular (Popular

INTERNATIONAL PRESS CONFERENCE



On 4th December an international press conference was held in the Press Room of the European Parliament prior to the main event and keynote address by His Holiness. His Holiness answered questions from a range of media outlets during a forty-minute press conference, attended by journalists and media organisations from UK, Spain, France, Belgium, Pakistan and other countries. In response to a question from the BBC about Islam's role in the world, His Holiness said, "Islam's message of peace is universal, which is why our motto is Love for All, Hatred for None." Responding to a question from a representative of the Spanish media, His Holiness said that all of the major religions in their original form taught a message of peace and so true Muslims believed in all of the Prophets. Each Prophet he said brought the



message that there is One God. In response to a question from a representative of Malta's media, His Holiness said that the duty of Ahmadi Muslims was to bring mankind closer to God and to make the people of the world aware of their duty to safeguard each other's rights.

The programme also featured a special dinner in the EU Parliament held in honour of His Holiness on Monday. The dinner hosted by Charles Tannock MEP was attended by 60 delegates with parliamentary, diplomatic and civic delegates from several countries attending including UK, Belgium, Poland, Norway, Sri

Lanka, Holland, Sweden, Spain, China, Estonia, as well as from the EU's External Action Service. On Tuesday a special lunch was a hosted in the European Parliament by Claude Moraes MEP for His Holiness.

Party), **Augustina Martínez Rubio** (Barrister in State Ecclesiastical Law, Professor in Madrid): His Holiness was briefed on the current economic situation in Spain. His Holiness counselled that any money received as part of a bailout settlement from the European Union should be spent wisely and for the betterment of the Spanish people. His Holiness said that he hoped and prayed that Spain's economic situation would improve and that the country would progress. His Holiness also spoke about his fondness for Spain both in terms of its climate and its people.

His Holiness also met with **Mr Jorge Koho Mello** (Head of Buddhist Community in Switzerland), **Dr Marian Apostol** (EPP Group European Parliament Central Secretariat in Brussels) and **Garry O'Halloran**, a barrister from Ireland.

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Historic Address by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, Khalifatul Masih V, Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium on 4th December 2012.

"Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem - In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, Ever Merciful.

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barakatohu; all distinguished guests - peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

First of all I would like to thank the organisers of this event who have given me the opportunity to speak to all of you here at the European Parliament. I would also like to thank all of the delegates, representing different countries, and other guests, who have gone to great efforts to come and attend this event.

Those people who are well-acquainted with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at—or Community—or even those who are less well-acquainted and who have contact with individual Ahmadis, will be fully aware that as a Community we constantly draw the attention of the world towards the establishment of peace and security. Certainly, we make full efforts within our resources towards achieving these goals.

As the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, I regularly speak about such matters whenever the opportunity arises. The fact that I speak about the need for peace and mutual love is not because of any new teaching brought by the Ahmadiyya Community. Whilst it is certainly true that to bring peace and reconciliation was one of the major objectives of the advent of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the reality is



that all of our acts are due to the teachings that were revealed to the Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.

In the 1400 years following the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, the pure teachings he had brought had, unfortunately, been long forgotten by the majority of Muslims. Thus, in order to rejuvenate the true Islam, Allah the Almighty sent the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian, in accordance with the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sa} of Islam. I would request all of you to keep this point in mind when I come to speak



"The formation of the European Union has been a great achievement on the part of European countries, for it has been a means of uniting the Continent. Thus, you should make all possible efforts to preserve this unity, by honouring each other's rights."

about Islam's teachings in relation to the development of peace and harmony in the world.

I should also mention that there are multiple aspects of 'peace' and 'security'. As every individual facet is important in its own right, at the same time the way each aspect interlinks is also extremely important. For example, the basic building block for peace in society is tranquillity and harmony within the family home. The situation within a home is not limited, but has a knock-on effect on the peace of the local area, which in turn affects the peace of the wider town or city. If there is disturbance in the home it will negatively affect the local area and that will affect the town or city. In the same way, the state of the town or city affects the peace of the entire country and ultimately the state of a nation affects the peace and harmony of the region or the entire world. Therefore, it is clear that if you wish to discuss even a single aspect of peace, you will find that its scope is not limited, but will continue to expand. In a similar way, we find that where there is a lack of peace, different methods are required to solve the issue, based on the underlying

problems that exist and upon the particular aspects of peace and security that have been violated. When we bear this in mind, it is obvious that to fully discuss and address these issues in detail requires much more time than is currently available. Nevertheless, I will try to cover at least some aspects of Islam's true teachings.

In the modern world we find that many objections are raised against Islam and much of the blame for the disorder and strife in the world is attributed to the religion. Such allegations are made even though the very meanings of the word Islam are 'peace' and 'security'. Furthermore, Islam is that religion which has given specific guidance on how to establish peace and has laid down certain rules to achieve this. Before I go on to present to you a picture of Islam's true and peaceful teachings, I would like to briefly discuss the current state of the world. I am sure you will be well versed in these matters already, but I will raise them so that you are able to keep them in view when I come to discuss Islam's teachings about peace and harmony. We are all aware and accept that today's world has become like a global village. We are all

connected through various means, whether it be through the modern modes of transport, whether it be through the media and Internet or through various other means. All of these factors have resulted in the nations of the world becoming closer together than ever before. We find that in major countries people of all races, religions and nationalities have settled and are living together. Indeed, in many countries there is a significant population of foreign immigrants. The immigrants have become so well-embedded that it would be extremely difficult, or even impossible, for governments or the local people to remove them now. Although attempts have been made to curtail immigration and certain restrictions have been implemented, there are still various means through which a citizen of one nation is able to enter another country. Indeed, leaving aside illegal immigration, we find that certain international laws exist that assist those who are forced to migrate for certain genuine reasons.

We also find that as a result of mass immigration, restlessness and anxiety are spreading in certain countries. The responsibility for this lies with both parties – the immigrants and the local people. On the one hand some immigrants provoke the locals by refusing to integrate to any degree, whilst on the other hand some of the locals are displaying a lack of tolerance and open-heartedness. From time to time the hatred boils over to a very dangerous extent. In particular, hatred or enmity on the part of the locals in Western countries is often manifested towards Islam in reaction to the negative behaviour of certain Muslims, especially immigrants. The anger and reaction is not just on a small scale, but can and does reach extreme heights, which is why Western leaders regularly speak about those problems. Therefore, we find that on occasion, the German Chancellor speaks about Muslims being a part of Germany; we find that the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom speaks of the need for Muslims to integrate and the leaders of some countries have gone as far as to give warnings to the Muslims. The internal state of conflicts, if not worsening, at least has become of some concern. These matters might heat up and may lead to the destruction of peace. There should be no doubt that the effect of such conflicts will not

be limited to the West but will impact the entire world, especially the Muslim countries. It will cause the relationship between the Western and Eastern World to severely deteriorate. Therefore, to improve the situation and for peace to develop, requires all parties to work together. Governments need to make policies that establish and protect mutual respect, through which hurting the sentiments of others or causing them any type of harm should be outlawed.

With regard to the immigrants, they must enter with a willingness to integrate with the local people, whilst the locals should be ready to open their hearts and display tolerance. Furthermore, simply to enforce certain restrictions against Muslims will not lead to peace, because they alone cannot change people's minds and views. This is not specific to Muslims, but whenever any person is forcibly suppressed due to his religion or belief, it will lead to a negative reaction through which peace will be severely harmed. As I have already said, we find that in certain countries conflicts are increasing, in particular between the local people and Muslim immigrants. It is apparent that both sides are becoming less tolerant and there is a reluctance to get to know one another. The European leadership needs to accept that this is the reality and understand it has a responsibility to establish mutual religious respect and tolerance. This is essential so that within every European country, and between European and Muslim countries, an atmosphere of goodwill develops so that the peace of the world is not shattered.

I believe that the cause of such conflicts and divisions is not only religion or beliefs and it is not merely a question of differences between Western and Muslim nations. In fact, a major root cause of the discord has been the global financial crisis. When there was no recession or credit crunch, nobody ever bothered about the influx of immigrants; Muslims or non-Muslims or Africans. However, the situation is now different and that has caused all this. It has even affected the mutual relationships of European countries, and so anger and resentment between the people of certain European nations and the people of other



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European countries is increasing daily. This state of despair is visible everywhere.

The formation of the European Union has been a great achievement on the part of European countries, for it has been a means of uniting the Continent. Thus, you should make all possible efforts to preserve this unity, by honouring each other's rights. The fears and worries held by members of the general public must be removed. To protect each other's society, you should be willing to accept fair and just demands of one another, and of course, there should be fair and just demands by the people of each and every country.

Remember that the strength of Europe lies in it remaining united and together as one. Such unity will not only benefit you here in Europe, but at a global level will be the means for this Continent to maintain its strength and influence. In fact, speaking from an Islamic perspective, we should strive for the entire world to unite together. In terms of currency, the world should be united. In terms of free business and trade, the world should be united and in terms of freedom of movement and immigration, cohesive and practical policies should be developed, so that the world can become united. In essence countries should seek to cooperate with one another so that division is replaced by unity. If these measures are taken then

it will soon become apparent that the existing conflicts will end and be replaced by peace and mutual respect, provided true justice is practiced and each country realises its responsibility. It is with great regret that I must say that, although it is an Islamic teaching, the Islamic countries have been unable to unite amongst themselves. If they were able to cooperate and unite, then the Islamic countries would not need to constantly seek Western aid and help in order to alleviate their internal troubles and needs.

With these words, I shall now come to speak about true Islamic teachings in relation to the establishment of long lasting peace in the world. First of all, a fundamental and basic teaching of Islam is that a true Muslim is a person from whose tongue and hand all other peaceful people are safe. This is the definition of a Muslim given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. After hearing this basic and beautiful principle, can any allegation or complaint be levelled against Islam? Certainly not. Islam teaches that only those who use their tongues and hands to spread injustice and hatred deserve to be punished. Thus, from a local level to a global level, if all parties remained within the confines of this golden principle we would find that there would never be religious disorder. There would never be political strife and nor would there be disorder based on greed and a desire to gain power. If these true Islamic principles are followed, then within

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This was perfectly illustrated by the Holy Prophet^{sa} when he famously said **a black person is not superior to a white person and nor is a white person superior to a black person. Neither is a European greater or superior to any other national, nor are Africans, Asians or the people of any other part of the world.**

Differences of nationality, colour or ethnicity act merely as a form of identity and recognition.

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countries, the members of the general public will safeguard each other's rights and feelings and the governments would fulfil their roles to protect all citizens. At an international level each nation would work together with a spirit of true sympathy and compassion towards one another.

Another key principle Islam teaches is that, in an effort to develop peace, it is necessary for all parties to never display any form of pride or arrogance. This was perfectly illustrated by the Holy Prophet^{sa} when he famously said a black person is not superior to a white person and nor is a white person superior to a black person. Neither is a European greater or superior to any other national, nor are Africans, Asians or the people of any other part of the world. Differences of nationality, colour or ethnicity act merely as a form of identity and recognition.

The truth is that in the modern world we all depend upon one another. Today even the major powers, like Europe or the United States, cannot survive by remaining completely isolated from all others. African countries cannot remain isolated and hope to flourish and neither can Asian countries or the people from any other part of the world. For example, if you want your economy to flourish, then you must be willing to embrace international trade. A clear example of how the world is now inter-linked is illustrated by the fact

that the European or the world's financial crisis of the past few years has negatively affected, more or less, every country of the world. Furthermore, for countries to advance in science, or to excel in other fields of expertise, requires them to cooperate and help each other.

We should always remember that the people of the world, whether they are from Africa, Europe, Asia or anywhere else, have been given great intellectual capabilities by Allah the Almighty. If all parties utilise their God-given faculties to the best of their abilities for the betterment of mankind, then we will find that the world will become a haven of peace. However, if the developed nations try to suppress the growth and progress of the less developed or developing nations and do not give opportunities to the fertile and bright minds of those nations, then, no doubt, anxiety will spread and the ensuing restlessness will ruin international peace and security.

Another principle of Islam to develop peace is that we should not tolerate injustice towards others or for their rights to be usurped. In the same way that we would not accept for our own rights to be taken, we should not be willing to accept it for others. Islam teaches that where retribution is required then it must be proportionate to the act of transgression. However, if forgiveness can lead to reformation then the option to forgive should



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“ Let it be clear that I am not speaking in support or favour of any particular individual country. What I wish to say is that all forms of cruelty, wherever they exist, must be eradicated and stopped regardless of whether they are perpetrated by the people of Palestine, the people of Israel or the people of any other country... ”

“ ... Islam teaches that the wealth and resources of others should not be looked upon enviously. We should not covet that which belongs to others, because this too is a means for peace to be dismantled. ”

be taken. The true and overarching objectives should always be reformation, reconciliation and the development of long lasting peace. However, what in reality is happening today? If anyone commits a wrong or an injustice, then the victim seeks to extract revenge in a way which is completely out of proportion and far greater than the original injustice committed.

This is exactly what we are witnessing these days in the escalating conflict between Israel and Palestine. The major powers have openly expressed their outrage and concern at the situations in Syria, Libya or Egypt; even though it can be argued that they were, in essence, internal matters. Yet they do not seem to be concerned about, or that concerned about, the Palestinian people. This perceived double standard is causing grievances and malice to increase in the hearts of the people from Muslim countries against the major powers of the world. This anger and animosity is extremely dangerous and could boil over and explode at any time. What will the result of that be? How much damage will be done to the developing world? Will they even be able to survive? How much will the developed nations be affected? Only God knows the answer to such questions. I cannot answer these and nobody can answer these. What we can be certain about is that the peace of the world will be destroyed.

Let it be clear that I am not speaking in support or favour of any particular individual country. What I wish to say is that all forms of cruelty, wherever they exist, must be eradicated and stopped regardless of whether they are perpetrated by the people of Palestine, the people of Israel or the people of any other country. The cruelties must be stopped, because if they are allowed to spread, then the flames of hatred will surely engulf the entire world to such an extent, that people will soon forget about the troubles caused by the current economic crisis. Instead, they will face a much more horrifying state of affairs. There will be such a huge loss of life that we cannot even comprehend or imagine.

Thus, it is the duty of the European countries,

who suffered great losses during the Second World War, to learn from their past and save the world from destruction. To do this, they must fulfil the requirements of justice and be willing to accept their responsibilities. Islam strongly emphasises the need to always act in a fair and just manner. It teaches that no party should be given preferential treatment, or favoured unduly. It should be that a wrongdoer knows that if he tries to act unjustly towards any country, no matter its size or status, he will not be allowed to do so by the international community. If the member states of the United Nations, the countries that derive benefit from the European Union and the countries that are under the influence of the big powers or even the under developed countries all come to accept this, then and only then, peace can emerge.

Further, only if those nations who have veto power at the United Nations realise they will be held to account for their actions, can justice be truly established. In fact, I will go one step further and say that the right of veto power can never allow or facilitate the establishment of peace, because clearly not all countries are at an equal level. This is a point I also made earlier this year when I addressed leading politicians and policy makers of the United States, at Capitol Hill. If we look at the voting history of the United Nations we find that the veto power has not always been used to help those who are being oppressed or who are acting in the right way. In fact, we have seen that the veto power has, on certain occasions, been misused to help and assist in cruelty, rather than to prevent it. This is not something that is hidden or unknown; many commentators openly write or speak about this.

Another beautiful principle taught by Islam is that peace in society requires one to suppress his anger, rather than allowing it to prevail over principles of honesty and justice. The early history of Islam testifies that the true Muslims always acted upon this principle and those who did not were severely rebuked by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. Yet, today, unfortunately, this is not always the case. There are cases where armies or

soldiers, who have been sent to establish peace, conduct themselves in a way that is entirely contrary to their stated aims. For example, in some countries foreign soldiers have treated the dead bodies of their victims in the most disrespectful and horrifying manner. Can peace be established in this way? The reaction to such behaviour cannot remain limited only to the affected country, but manifests throughout the world. Of course, if Muslims are mistreated, Muslim extremists take advantage of it and the peace of the world is shattered, although it is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Islam teaches that peace can only be established by helping both the oppressed and oppressor in a manner that is completely impartial, free from vested interests and devoid of all enmity. Peace is made by giving all parties an equal platform and playing field.

As the time is limited, I shall mention just one further point, which is that Islam teaches that the wealth and resources of others should not be looked upon enviously. We should not covet that which belongs to others, because this too is a means for peace to be dismantled. If wealthy countries try to extract and utilise the wealth and resources of less developed nations to fulfil their own needs, then naturally, restlessness will spread. Where appropriate, the developed nations can take a small and fair amount in return for their services, whilst the majority of resources should be utilised to help the under-developed countries to raise their standards of living. They should be allowed to prosper and should be helped in their efforts to reach the same levels as the developed world, because then, and only then can peace be established. If the leadership of those countries is not honest, then the Western nations or developed nations should themselves monitor and organise the development of the country by giving them aid.

There are numerous other points I could cover, but due to a lack of time, I shall restrict myself to the few that I have mentioned. Certainly, whatever I have explained represents the true teachings of Islam.

There is one question that may arise in your hearts and so let me address it in advance. You may say that if these are the true teachings of Islam, then why do we see such divisions and disorder in the Muslim world? This I have answered earlier by mentioning the need for the advent of a reformer, whom we believe was the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. We, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, always endeavour to convey these true teachings to as wide an audience as we can. I would request all of you to also make efforts to raise awareness within your own circles of influence about these issues, so that long lasting peace can be developed in all parts of the world.

If we fail in this task, then no part of the world will remain safe from the horrifying and destructive effects of war. I pray that may Allah the Almighty enable the people of the world to rise above their personal interests and desires, in an effort to save the world from the coming destruction. It is the developed nations of the West that hold the greatest amount of power in today's world, and so it is your duty, above others, to pay urgent attention to these matters of crucial importance.

At the end, I would like to once again thank all of you for taking the time to come and listen to what I have said. May Allah bless you. Thank you very much."

For the ease of non-Muslim readers, '(sa)' or 'sa' after the words, 'Holy Prophet', or the name 'Muhammad', are used normally in small letters. They stand for 'Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam' meaning 'peace and blessings of Allah be upon him'. Likewise, the letters '(as)' or 'as' after the name of all other prophets is an abbreviation meaning 'peace be upon him' derived from 'Alaihis salatu wassalam' which are words that a Muslim utters out of respect whenever he or she comes across that name.

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT GREETES HIS HOLINESS



After His Holiness's address, Mr Martin Schulz MEP, the President of the European Parliament, greeted His Holiness and welcomed him on behalf of the Parliament.



Extracts from others speeches

Tunne Kelam MEP (EPP) and Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslim Group

Your Holiness, Chairman and dear friends, it is our pleasure to host you here in one of the biggest assembly halls of the European Parliament. We have come here to join in our aspiration for harmony and peace.

I think this is a special time as His Holiness has pointed out on numerous occasions. Conflicts are spreading in the world and conflicts are generated by difference of opinions, by injustice and first of all by not turning enough attention to our counterparts because we are bound to be united in one belief, in belief in God. Every big religion teaches us that you should first honour God and then respect your neighbour. So in your religion it is also said that if there is any cruel ritual practised by any religion, it cannot be the teaching of any prophet of God, and I think this is a very good guidance for us all.

We need to have more attention, more respect for each other and I think it is very important [to acknowledge] that your community rejects violence, especially terror, which is spreading more and more in the modern world.



Your role will be very important not only as an ideology, but in practise to bring people, different religions and beliefs together and to help us discover that after all we are all brothers and sisters and children of one God.

It is our good opportunity today to stress this message and I am happy that members of the European Parliament could contribute to this. Also the role of the European Parliament is to turn its attention to the persecution of minorities, especially religious minorities. So it is our role to keep it in mind, and try to help you morally and politically in every part of the world because it is very important to extend our scope of knowledge.

I come from a small country called Estonia, which became free from the Soviet occupation only 21 years ago. We have experienced cruel dictatorship and also suppression of religion so we can probably better understand what it means to belong to minorities, especially persecuted minorities, and it is our duty and commitment to help you, to guarantee your equal chances and life in freedom, in free choice as you prefer it. It is a message about solidarity, which European Parliament is spreading and I hope that from on this message will be heard louder and stronger than ever.

Jean Lambert MEP (Green), Chair of the European Parliament South Asia Delegation

I would also like to add my voice to that of my colleagues in welcoming His Holiness and all of you here this afternoon.

I chair the Parliament's delegation for South Asia and one country covered there is Pakistan and I know that this is an issue of concern to many here. For the European Union, freedom of belief or the freedom to have no belief is a fundamental human right, and it forms part of the human rights dialogue pursued by the European Union, with many countries throughout the world. As chairs of parliament delegations we are required in our travels to raise issues of human rights with the governments and the political parties of the countries where we travel.

We were in Pakistan earlier this year in July, a group of three of us from the European Parliament and we met, in Islamabad, the current Prime Minister, leaders of the many political parties, the Foreign Minister, Madam Speaker of the lower house and many others members of the political community as well as civil society and we raised a number of issues of concern to parliament.

One of them was the issue of rights of women and girls in education, secondly the issue of the death penalty, and also the question of the treatment of those of various faiths and minorities. In that discussion we also talked very much about electoral law.

We do believe very firmly as a parliament that the right of each and every individual to take part in the electoral process is of extreme importance, and in the report of the election observation mission the last elections this question was raised about how the people belonging to Ahmadiyya faith express themselves in the elections in Pakistan. We said very firmly then that the electoral commission there and the parliament in Pakistan have to find a solution to this question, that it is not acceptable to have a group of people who feel they wish to participate in elections, wish to vote but feel that the electoral system does not work for them and puts an arbitrary ban on that participation. That's an issue that features in our report from our trip this year and an issue that will be pursued with the authorities there.

We also pursued with them questions about education. One of the themes of today is looking at the issue of extremism and therefore issues of who is educated, who is doing the educating and what is the content of that education become extremely important questions. The issue about the quality and content of the teaching of the many of the madrassas was raised with us by many people in Pakistan of different political groups, different religious faiths, different roles in society. Many felt that the [madrassas were of] poor quality that many of the madrassas were basically schools of teaching hatred and teaching terrorism, and indeed we had people saying to us that the Shia Muslims are now targeted and to some extent madrassas have played a role in this development.

So we are taking that message very seriously. It's part of the discussion we are having with the Commission and with our delegation in Islamabad, in terms of the commitment that the European Union has in terms of education in Pakistan – a quality education where textbooks do not preach hatred against people from other countries, other faiths, or indeed anybody who is considered to be different, and where access to that education should be available for all, not only for those who can afford it, and not indeed for the poorest being forced to take whatever is available,



even when that perpetuates hatred, and indeed creates many of the problems on the ground in Pakistan.

So those are issues of grave concern to this Parliament, and indeed to all those in the European Union who have official dealings with Pakistan, and please be assured that those issued will be pursued. What we are after is a country where people can live in peace together and feel free to practise their faith without risking their lives for doing so.

Baroness Sarah Ludford MEP (ALDE), Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslim Group

I am delighted that I have had, over many years, good relations with the Ahmadi community in London and indeed at national level in the UK. I have attended several [Ahmadi] conventions over the years, most recently this July where I was able to listen to the address given by His Holiness.

It is so timely and so appropriate to have this conference on the theme of responding to the challenge of extremism, and especially in the European Parliament because the whole message and purpose of this institution is to create unity and diversity, given the tragic history especially in the 20th Century of Europe when extremism and hatred led to death and murder. We never forget that and what we have built and continue to build in the European Union is built on values of freedom, respect for diversity and human rights, including of course the very important ones of freedom of speech and freedom of religion. So there is a real interface between theme of this conference and having it in this European Parliament forum.

The Ahmadi tenet of "Love for All, Hatred for None" is a true inspiration. It is a force for peace and respectful co-existence that we desperately need in the modern world. In all parts of the world, sadly, we have instances of hatred, discrimination, and violence directed towards those considered to be not of the majority or different in some way and it is happening in every continent and none of us can be insulated from this in the modern world and what happens in other parts of the world matters so much to us.

We are well aware and we have passed resolutions in this Parliament about the appalling attitudes and treatments, of not only discrimination but also violence directed towards the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in countries like Pakistan and Indonesia. I assure you that it is a matter of great concern in this house and it will continue to be. Also in the UK I have taken up the issue of broadcasting channels, which are inciting hatred and violence. I believe I have not had a satisfactory response from the responsible authorities and it is something that we need to keep pushing.

People holding extreme views in itself is not a crime, but once they translate those into harming other people, harming the interests of a person or co-citizens then that becomes a very big problem indeed. We have been seeing increasing numbers, hundreds, of Ahmadi Muslims who are being killed in Pakistan to take one country. So I would conclude by saying that I am really inspired by the fantastic turnout at this conference today and it is a privilege to work with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Claude Moraes MEP (S&D) Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslim Group

It is a great pleasure to be here and it is a huge pleasure to welcome all of you. This is a bigger turnout than we usually get at any meeting in the European Parliament and it speaks to the attraction of His Holiness.

It was a great pleasure to speak to His Holiness earlier today because I said to him then that something is going on in the world today, which is that there is a great need, a great thirst for tolerance and respect for one another, which are not clichés anymore, but a huge need for us to listen to each other and the European Parliament is an example of a genuine and unique cross-country, cross-cultural parliament. It is the only cross-cultural parliament in the world and it is a parliament where it is possible for myself, a Christian Indian representing London, speaking with a Scottish accent, to table a question with Tunne



Kelam on the persecution of Christians in Pakistan some time ago. We are able to do this because in our constitution we talk about persecution and human rights, but we have to tackle the tough question of tolerance. That means we are able to get out of our own comfort zone and question our own values within our European Union community, question human rights issues around the world, and also question ourselves as to what we do here in the European Union.

His Holiness coming here today illustrates our thirst for knowledge of religious communities around the world. The Ahmadiyya Community needs to be understood more, its charitable work, its thirst for tolerance and understanding, its themes of "Love for all" and "Peace for All", its understanding of faiths, its work on the provision of healthcare, its drive to serve humanity without prejudice and its absolute commitment to education for girls and boys.

I was saying to His Holiness earlier today that we do not understand enough about individual religious communities and their work. I have met with the Ahmadiyya Community in my city of London, but we need to get that message across to a wider community. I don't think you can do better than come to the European Parliament to get that message across.

So thank you, your Holiness, for coming today. You have support, not narrow religious support, but support on your wider themes of tolerance and tackling those differences. Thank you very much for your presence here today.

Dr Charles Tannock MEP (ECR), Chair of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslim Group

This very vital and timely theme of today's conference "A Message of Peace" comes at a critical time in global politics.

As his Holiness has said before, extremist ideology has an international impact, if the countries do not check such extremism then it will spread. I will talk about how extremism must be tackled and how the Ahmadiyya are a welcome example of tolerance and moderation in a troubled world.

We in Europe believe that democracy generally as a rule goes hand in hand with the respect of fundamental rights, but the fact remains that religious extremism and violence represents a clear threat to both peace and respect for human rights which ultimately also underpins our democratic ideals. This religious extremism can also sadly sometimes be closely linked to a brand of international terrorism that is a threat precisely because it is not limited by borders or nationalities. These hardline Islamists jihadi sects do not represent, in anyway, either Islam as a whole or the wider Muslim world, but sadly they are an example of a movement today where violent words diffused across the internet or satellite television can literally lead to violent actions worldwide. Ahmadis know this only too well as their community has suffered in countries as disparate as Pakistan and Indonesia and from Nigeria to Kyrgyzstan, and we in this parliament have been involved in a number of resolutions on these very issues.

The impact of religious extremism affects us all and poses a common security threat in all our countries as well as threatening our fundamental human rights. The violent scenes often viewed on the television screens in the west are not an armchair spectator sport. Terrorism in Madrid and London suddenly brought home for the first time to ordinary Europeans the modern reality of religion-based terrorism.

For the past decade governments across Europe have wrestled with how to combat fanaticism, while preserving hard-won democratic freedom including religious expression. Governments across Europe have sought to integrate Muslim communities better to the mainstream in order to minimise the danger of alienation and radicalisation. European societies rightly believe that democratic values will ultimately prevail over religious fanaticism.

Thucydides once said that the secret of happiness is freedom, the secret of freedom is courage. My encounter with Hina Rabbani Khar, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan who addressed the Foreign Affairs Committee of this parliament by sheer coincidence, suggests that political courage is occasionally lacking in certain countries in the defence of freedom over extremism. Pakistan offers us an abject lesson in the destabilising and debilitating effects of allowing religious extremism to flourish. Discrimination is openly written into the country's legal code. Pakistan's Blasphemy and Ahmadiyya targeted laws institutionalises discrimination and therefore sometimes sanction intolerance. Those who bravely call for a change in these laws as the late Governor of Punjab Salman Taseer did, often pay with their lives.



The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan lives under constant threat, both legal and physical. In Pakistan barely a month goes by without the killing of an Ahmadi Muslim and it's rare that the perpetrators are brought to justice, as the authorities sometimes prefer to turn a blind eye for fear of a popular backlash. It is also worrying to see an increase in attacks against Ahmadis in Indonesia, a country which is the largest Muslim country in the world, and otherwise known for its successful democratic traditions, tolerance and transition.

Sadly, religious persecution still persists against other diverse communities living in majority Muslim countries. I have personally campaigned strongly in this parliament as a defender of these communities' right to peacefully live and practise their faiths – I have worked on behalf of Assyrians in Iraq, the Baha'is in Iran and the Coptic Christians in Egypt.

I have developed over some years good links with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in London. The Community is a prosperous, courageous and determined one. Its slogan "Love for All, Hatred for None" is the welcome antithesis of the hatred and violence perpetrated by small minority of small jihadi hardline radicals. So what is the message of peace that should come out of this conference today? Firstly, the answer to Islamist extremism needs to come from within moderate and reformist Muslim currents, such as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, if it to be credible and lasting. Secondly, Europe needs to face up to the unprecedented nature of the threat. Tolerating a flourishing of hardline intolerant voices cannot be the right way. That European society is being tested as never before is a fact, and once we have lost our cohesion as a society based around our cherished values we are unlikely to ever win them back.

Rafiq Hayat, Amir (National President) Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of you for joining us today at the inaugural conference of the European Parliament Friends of Ahmadiyya Muslims Group. It is made even more special by the blessed presence of His Holiness Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad – the Khalifa of Islam and Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a distinguished sect within Islam. Its claim is unique and its history and mission reflect complete dedication to peace. In many countries across Europe it is one of the earliest Muslim communities in modern history. In the UK for example it built London's first mosque in 1924; in Spain it built one of the first mosques after a period of nearly 700 years and in Germany more recently it built the first mosque in East Berlin – these are houses of God and institutions of peace, open for people of all faiths.

We believe in integration, engagement and interfaith dialogue based on respect and we are dedicated to human rights.

Sadly despite our focus on peace we are persecuted – severely in some countries where members are murdered regularly simply on grounds of faith – but this only strengthens our resolve to secure the rights of others.

It is our true belief that this resolve is only possible because we have something that is unique in the Muslim world, and that is we have global spiritual leadership.

We are now in the era of the fifth Khalifa, His Holiness Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, and it is through this that we stand united as a community with a clear focus on peace under the guidance of His Holiness, who is widely renowned as a man of peace.... His Holiness is widely travelled and has delivered a number of keynote addresses worldwide – from the House of Commons in the United Kingdom to Capitol Hill in the United States and across Africa and other developing and developed countries and regularly meets with world leaders. This conference represents his first ever visit to the European Parliament.

Deeply troubled by the developments in the East and the West and the growing international tensions he has written to Heads of State of major countries urging a genuine effort to be made towards peace and reconciliation, to avoid an impending catastrophe.

The tensions that capitalise on extremist philosophies and can only be countered with a sincere effort for peace. He is a man of peace and we are delighted and honoured to have him amongst us today.



Dr Charles Tannock MEP (UK)



Tunne Kelam MEP (Estonia)



Phil Bennion MEP (UK) and Jean Lambert MEP (UK)



Marina Yannakoudakis MEP (UK)



Garry O'Halloran, Barrister from Ireland



Ingrid Norstein (Norway)



Mr Billy Taranger and Ms Ann Katherine Skgorhammer MP (Norway)



Jose Maria Alonso Ruiz (MP), Pedro Luis Sanz Carlavilla and Augustina Rubio (Spain)

Loyalty

Freedom

Equality

Respect

Peace



www.LoveForAllHatredForNone.org

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