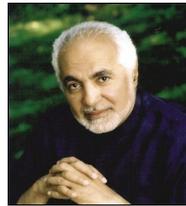


# Religious Diversity and Tolerance

## U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

Based on mutual respect and shared values, the U.S Mission works with Indonesia to strengthen democracy, sustain the environment, promote prosperity, enhance understanding and ensure security for our people, our nations, and our region

## Feisal Abdul Rauf : Speaker Profile



Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is the Founder of Cordoba Initiative, an independent, multi-faith, and multi-national project that works with state and non-state actors to improve Muslim-West relations. In this capacity, he provides innovative solutions to those areas where conflict between Islamic and Western communities undermines local and global security.

Under Imam Feisal’s leadership, the Cordoba Initiative’s programs craft strategic avenues for approaching divisive Muslim-West tensions. The programs include the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT), which cultivates the next generation of Muslim leaders from all over the world, and the Women’s Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE), which empowers Muslim women globally.

Imam Feisal often receives requests for his expertise and advice because of his skillful approach to the complex intersection of Islamic and Western viewpoints. A number of these

requests have resulted in working relationships with offices in the U.S. Department of State, members of the U.S. Congress, and representatives of foreign governments.

Imam Feisal balances his international responsibilities with his dedication to local and national concerns. In 1997, he founded the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) the first Muslim organization committed to building bridges between Muslims and the American public by elevating the discourse on Islam through educational outreach, interfaith collaboration, culture and arts. Imam Feisal is a Trustee of the Islamic Center of New York and is a Vice Chair on the board of the Interfaith Center of New York.

Recognizing his inter-religious bridge-building work Imam Feisal has been a recipient of numerous awards such as the AICPR Annual Alliance Peace builder Award and Annual James Parks Morton Interfaith Center of New York Award. In 2010, he received the Open Center of New York Interfaith award, Arianna Huffington’s “2010 Game hanger” award, and was listed as

one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers of 2010 by the Foreign Policy magazine. Most recently, in April 2011, Time Magazine named him among the 100 most influential people of the world.

A charismatic public speaker, Imam Feisal is frequently asked to comment on issues pertaining to Islam and the Muslim world. He has appeared regularly at the Council on Foreign Relations, in national and international media such as CNN and BBC, and has been widely quoted in The New York Times, Huffington Post and the Jerusalem Post.

Imam Feisal comes from a family steeped in religious and spiritual activity. Born of Egyptian parentage and educated in England, Egypt, and Malaysia, he holds a Bachelor of Science in Physics from Columbia University in New York and a Master of Science in Plasma Physics from Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey. He speaks English, Arabic, and Malay.

Source: <http://goo.gl/d2MNR>

### Inside this issue:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Feisal Abdul Rauf: Speaker Profile                             | 1 |
| Clinton Highlights Religious Freedom, Tolerance as U.S. Values | 2 |
| Religious Freedom Laws Help Create Culture of Tolerance        | 2 |
| More Resources   | 3 |
| About Information Resource Center (IRC)                        | 4 |

This information package is compiled for the U.S. target opportunity speaker program on “Moving the Mountain” book tour in Jakarta, June 25-29, 2012

*Disclaimer: Books, articles and websites described in this info package present a diversity of views in order to keep the IRC user abreast of current issues in the United States in particular and worldwide in general. These items represented the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official U.S. Government policy.*

## Clinton Highlights Religious Freedom, Tolerance as U.S. Values

By MacKenzie C. Babb | Staff Writer | 13 September 2011

Washington — The protection of religious freedom and the promotion of religious tolerance around the world are fundamental concerns of the United States, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said at the roll-out of the State Department's 13th annual International Religious Freedom Report.

"As we release this report, we reaffirm the role that religious freedom and tolerance play in building stable and harmonious societies," Clinton said September 13 at the State Department event.

"When governments crack down on religious expression, when politicians or public figures try to use religion as a wedge issue, or when societies fail to take steps to denounce religious bigotry and curb discrimination based on religious identity, they embolden extremists and fuel sectarian strife," she said. Clinton added that the reverse is also true: Governments that respect religious freedom and work with civil society to promote mutual respect can "create a climate of tolerance that helps make a country more stable, more secure and more prosperous."

She said the United States will con-

tinue efforts to support religious freedom both at home and abroad, as religious tolerance is an essential element "not only of a sustainable democracy, but also of a peaceful society that respects the rights and dignity of each individual."

Clinton said people who have a voice in how they are governed, no matter their religion, are more likely to have a stake in the success of both their government and society. "That is good for stability, for American national security and for global security," she said.

The secretary applauded Turkish authorities for taking recent steps to improve religious tolerance. She said the government issued a decree in August inviting non-Muslims to reclaim churches and synagogues confiscated 75 years ago. Clinton said Turkey now allows women to wear headscarves at universities, "which means female students no longer have to choose between their religion and their education."

She said the goals of the new report are to call attention to steps taken to improve religious freedom and to promote tolerance while also shining a spotlight on violations of religious freedom. She was joined at

the release by Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Michael Posner and Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Suzan Johnson Cook.

The report is submitted each year to Congress in compliance with the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. It documents major developments with respect to religious freedom and tolerance in 198 countries and territories. Although the report typically covers a one-year period, the September release only spans July to December 2010, as the State Department is shifting to a calendar-year reporting period.

Source: <http://goo.gl/Q3FgA>

Related links:

Remarks: Secretary Clinton on Combating Religious Intolerance <http://goo.gl/Ru3Kc>

International Religious Freedom Act. <http://goo.gl/hmMBX>

2010 International Religious Freedom Report: Indonesia  
English version: <http://goo.gl/p2Qg9>  
Indonesia version: <http://goo.gl/p1VBI>

## Religious Freedom Laws Help Create Culture of Tolerance

By Louise Fenner | Staff Writer | 25 August 2008

Scholar R. Scott Hanson discusses religious diversity in America.

Washington -- An openness to immigration and laws protecting religious freedom helped create the conditions for religious tolerance in the United States, says an expert on immigration, religion and urban issues in America who has researched a neighborhood in New York City he calls "perhaps the most extreme case of religious pluralism in the world."

That neighborhood is Flushing, Queens, which encompasses more than 200 places of religious worship within 6.5 square kilometers. Queens is one of the five boroughs that make up New York City.

Flushing has become a model for religious pluralism in America, says R. Scott Hanson, a visiting assistant professor of history at the State University of New York at Binghamton and an affiliate of the Pluralism Project at Harvard Uni-

versity. He answered questions about religious diversity during an *America.gov* webchat August 19.

While many communities in the United States are religiously diverse, Hanson said, the dense concentration of houses of worship and absence of widespread religious conflict in Flushing make it special.

The First Amendment to the U.S.

*Continue to page 4*

## More Resources

### ARTICLES

**America's True History of Religious Tolerance/** Kenneth Davis; Smithsonian Magazine, 2010.

The idea that the United States has always been a bastion of religious freedom is reassuring—and utterly at odds with the historical record. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/oiOQ>

### RESEARCH REPORTS

**American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us/**Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2011.

America is unusual among countries in that it is at once religiously devout, religiously diverse and religiously tolerant. The co-author of a book on the subject discusses ways in which religion divides American society but also other ways in which it is united by religion, or at the very least, in spite of religious differences. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/8Bd6e>

**Muslim Americans: Mainstream and Moderate Attitude/** Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2011.

While a majority of Muslim Americans say they have endured suspicion and enhanced scrutiny since the 9/11 attacks nearly 10 years ago, a wide-ranging survey finds no indication of increased alienation and anger or rising support for Islamic extremism. On the contrary, majorities of Muslim Americans express concern about the possible rise of Islamic extremism, both in America and abroad. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/cq2gn>

**Muslim-Western Tensions Persist/** By Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2011.

Muslim and Western publics continue to see relations between them as generally bad, but there has been somewhat of a thaw in the views of the U.S. and Europe about the Muslim world. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/kLOuF>

### ELECTRONIC JOURNALS

**eJournalUSA: Being Muslim in America/**Bureau of IIP, U.S. Department of State, March 2009.

With freedom, faith, and hard work, each successive wave of immigrants has added its distinctive contributions to the American story. And today, this story is the Muslim-American story too. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/pvocq>

**eJournalUSA: Freedom of Faith/**Bureau of IIP, U.S. Department of State, August 2008.

The principle of religious freedom is a cherished right in the United States, one that has historical roots older than the formation of the nation itself. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/JJhKd>

### VIDEOS

**Religious Diversity: Land Called Paradise/**Bureau of IIP, U.S. State Department.

In December 2007, over 2,000 American Muslims were asked what they would wish to say to the rest of the world. Find their answers in this music video at: <http://goo.gl/muzVE>

**Religious Diversity: Training for a Religious Calling/**Bureau of IIP, U.S. State Department.

Worldwide students of Hartford Seminary & Yale Diversity School share their experiences on studying in the ecumenical interfaith environment. Watch the video at: <http://goo.gl/kERhQ>

### IRC COLLECTIONS

**Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America/** Gustav Niebuhr; New York, Viking, 2008

The United States is the most religiously diverse nation in the world and the most religiously diverse collection of people in history. And even in this age of increasing religious violence, there is a growing movement of cooperation: thousands of devout worshippers who are willing to take a gamble on people of radically different faiths.

**Islam, Fundamentalism and the Betrayal of Tradition: Essays by Western Muslim Scholars/**Joseph E. B. Lombard. Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2009.

The book contains a series of essays that explain the misconceptions that lie at the heart of Western attitudes towards Islam.

**Journey into America: The Challenge of Islam/**Akbar Ahmed; Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2010.

Renowned scholar Akbar Ahmed conducted the most comprehensive study to date of the American Muslim community. *Journey into America* explores and documents how Muslims are fitting into U.S. society, placing their experience within the larger context of American identity.

**For more titles of IRC collection, please check our online catalog at:**

<http://69.63.217.22/U10086Staff/OPAC/index.asp>



Get scholarly articles on Muslim and West relations, religious freedom and tolerance from eLibraryUSA, an online resource with access to around 30 authoritative databases which covers a broad range of sources about American culture, society and policy.

To get access and training on eLibraryUSA, contact IRC at:

**Email: [ircjakarta@state.gov](mailto:ircjakarta@state.gov)**  
**Phone: 021-350-8467**

### Contact Info:

Information Resource Center  
Public Affairs Section  
U.S. Embassy Jakarta  
Address:  
Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan 4-5,  
Jakarta 10110, Indonesia

Tel.: (021) 350-8467  
Fax.: (021) 350-8466  
Email: [ircjakarta@state.gov](mailto:ircjakarta@state.gov)  
Website:  
<http://jakarta.usembassy.gov/irc.html>

Walk-in Visitors  
(by appointment only):  
Monday to Friday; from 07:30 to 16:00  
Closed on U.S. and Indonesian holidays

### About the Information Resource Center

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center (IRC) in Jakarta is a specialized reference and research facility whose goal is to provide you with accurate, up-to-date and authoritative information about U.S. society and policy materials, covering such topics as U.S. foreign policy, government, economics and trade, history, social and cultural issues. Three professionally-trained reference specialists will help you to retrieve needed-information quickly, conveniently, and free of charge.

The IRC collection includes a reference collection, a periodicals section, and access to extensive online commercial-databases.

For details on reference and periodical collections, please check our online catalog at <http://69.63.217.22/U10086Staff/OPAC/index.asp>.

For all IRC information products, including this info package are available online at: <http://jakarta.usembassy.gov/infoproduct.html>

Information queries may be submitted to us by phone, fax, mail, and e-mail. For personal research assistance, you are also welcome to visit us by one-day in advanced appointment

## Religious Freedom Laws Help Create Culture of Tolerance

*Continued from page 4*

Constitution protects the right to worship freely or not worship at all, and prohibits the government from establishing a national religion. Hanson said the protection of these "basic rights" is essential in creating a culture of tolerance.

"The conditions for diversity seem to stem from a democratic government that permits immigration and protects religious freedom by law," he observed.

While the efforts of religious institutions and grassroots groups to promote tolerance are important, they are not enough, Hanson said. "In every major world religion, you can find a common message of tolerance, but I think a democratic government that protects religious freedom by law is the only way to guarantee this."

Flushing has a long history of religious tolerance. In 1657, a group of colonists issued a public notice -- a "remonstrance" -- decrying efforts by the Dutch colonial government to force discrimination against Quakers. The Flushing Remonstrance was one of the earliest arguments for religious freedom in the United States, Hanson said.

Today in Flushing, "there are half a

dozen Hindu temples, two Sikh gurdwaras, several mosques, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean Buddhist temples, a Taoist temple, over 100 Korean churches, Latin American evangelical churches, Falun Gong practitioners, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons ... as well as some of the oldest churches and synagogues in the city," Hanson said in an essay for the Pluralism Project.

Most of the recent growth in Flushing and throughout Queens is due to immigration from Latin America, East Asia and South Asia, he told the webchat participants. According to the 2000 census, more than half the residents of Flushing are Asian American, and Queens is now the most ethnically diverse county in the United States.

"I think the real question people are wondering about now for the 21st century is if places like Flushing are now too diverse to still allow for a sense of community," Hanson said.

This can be a problem with recent and first-generation immigrants, who "need time to settle, build institutions, and assimilate" before they feel a part of the community.

However, "Asian Americans who grew up in Flushing are now more politically engaged with the local community than their parents," he said.

Since the late 1980s, there have been several attempts "to bring various religious and ethnic groups in the community together led by local religious leaders and activists," Hanson said. These generally are prompted by incidents of vandalism, bigotry or events such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, "but then [these efforts] fade. As a result, interaction between groups has been limited and relatively superficial, but at least leaders got to know each other."

"Only very recently has there been more of an organized attempt to bridge the divisions and find common ground," he said.

"Recent studies show that the 2nd-3rd generations [of immigrants] ultimately become more civically involved -- as you're starting to see in Flushing now with the current City Councilman, John Liu -- the city's first Asian American to hold that office," Hanson said. Liu, who was born in Taiwan and came to America at age 5, represents north-east Queens on the New York City Council.

"I predict there will be much more civic participation and meaningful interfaith activity in the coming years," Hanson added.

Read more at: <http://goo.gl/xnt02>