



**ISLAM & LIBERTY**  
NETWORK

**Our Mission is to Explore and  
Promote a Muslim Case for Freedom**

**Here is how we are creating an impact**

5 September 2021

# Who we are?

- Islam and Liberty Network (L) Foundation is legally organised as a non-profit Labuan foundation registered in Malaysia and is governed by an international board of directors, all of whom except for the part-time CEO give their time freely.
- Founded in 2011, it is a platform for researchers, academics and public intellectuals to explore and promote a Muslim case for religious, economic and political freedom by disseminating knowledge and developing human resources. We are funded by like minded foundations and individuals.

# Our Objectives

*We explore and promote on 'A Muslim Case for Freedom' by:*

- Publishing and disseminating high quality scholarly papers and articles;
- Developing a vibrant network of public intellectuals, scholars, and researchers;
- Educating and training young researchers, writers, teachers and journalists working on Islam

# Our Annual Programme

Annual International Conference leading to dialogue, papers and books

Summer Workshop leading to training of young scholars

Local seminars for public education particularly for students

Webinars and podcasts for scholarly debate and public education

Monthly articles for scholarly debate and public education

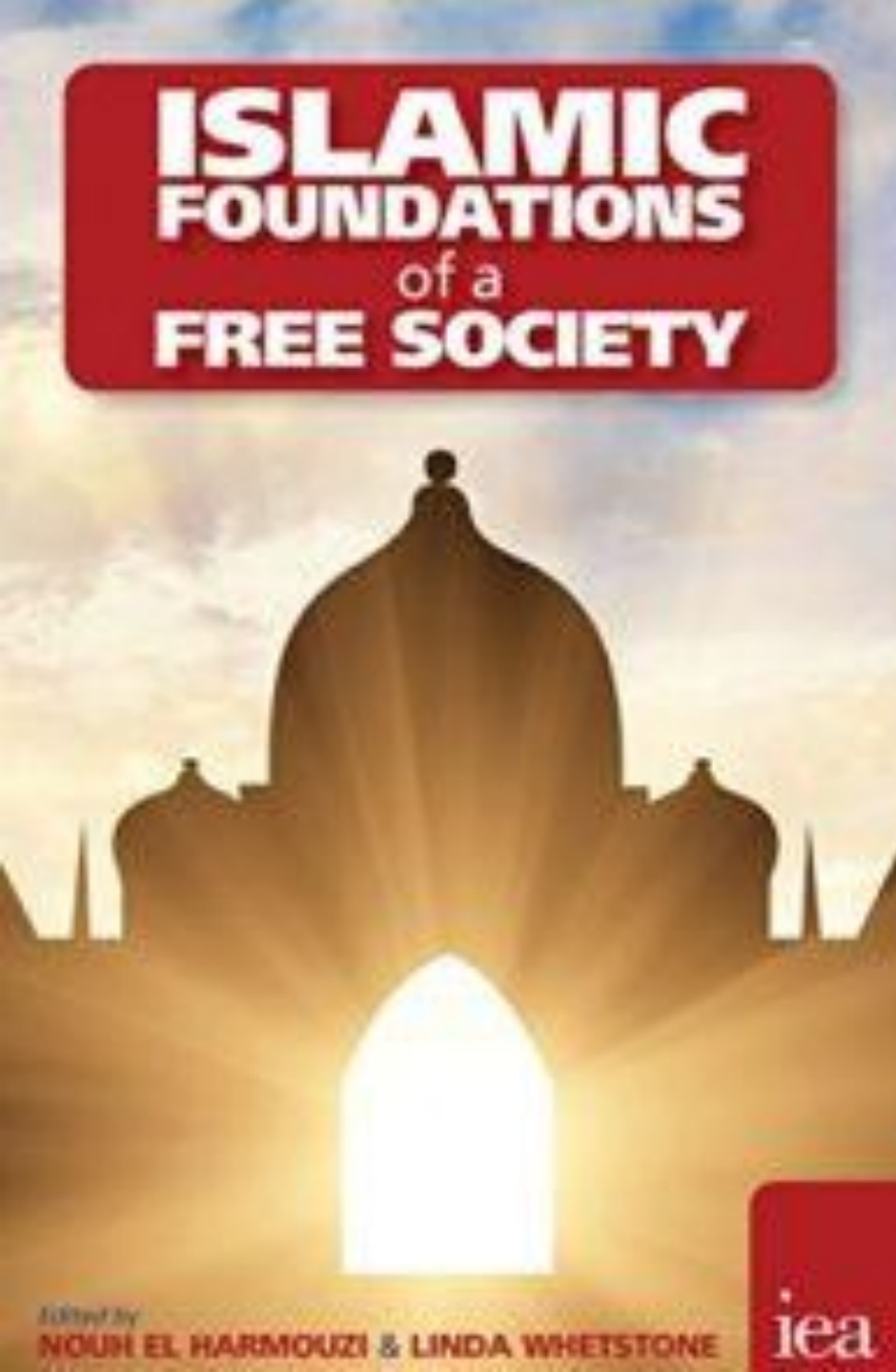


Founding  
meeting of  
ILN (formerly  
Istanbul  
Network) in  
Istanbul,  
2011



# Snapshots from our 7 international conferences (2012-2019)





# The Book Beyond Boundaries

## Publication of “Islamic Foundations of a Free Society”

In October 2016, the Institute of Economic Affairs published the book *Islamic Foundations of a Free Society*, edited by Dr. Nuh El-Harmouzi and Linda Whetstone. It was written by 13 Islamic scholars from countries as diverse as Afghanistan and the USA and aims to inform those in the West who view Islam with fear and suspicion while encouraging Muslims to remember and learn from their history of rich and pluralistic Islamic civilisations. Most of the papers were developed from presentations made at the annual conferences of the Istanbul Network for Liberty, later named as Islam and Liberty Network. It has been translated into Arabic, French, Turkish and Dari. You can [download it free from here](#) or buy it via [Amazon](#). It has already been used in discussions all over the world.





### **Improving Understanding in Europe**

In March 2017, the book was the theme for one of the sessions at a seminar at St. Mary's University, Twickenham hosted by the Benedict XVI Centre for Religion and Society titled Understanding Islam, and its relationship with a free society and a free economy.

### **Laying the Foundation in Malaysia**

In April 2017, the Institute of Economic Affairs shipped 100 donated copies of the book to Noor Amin Ahmad, Director of the Institute for Leadership which organized various events for students outreach.

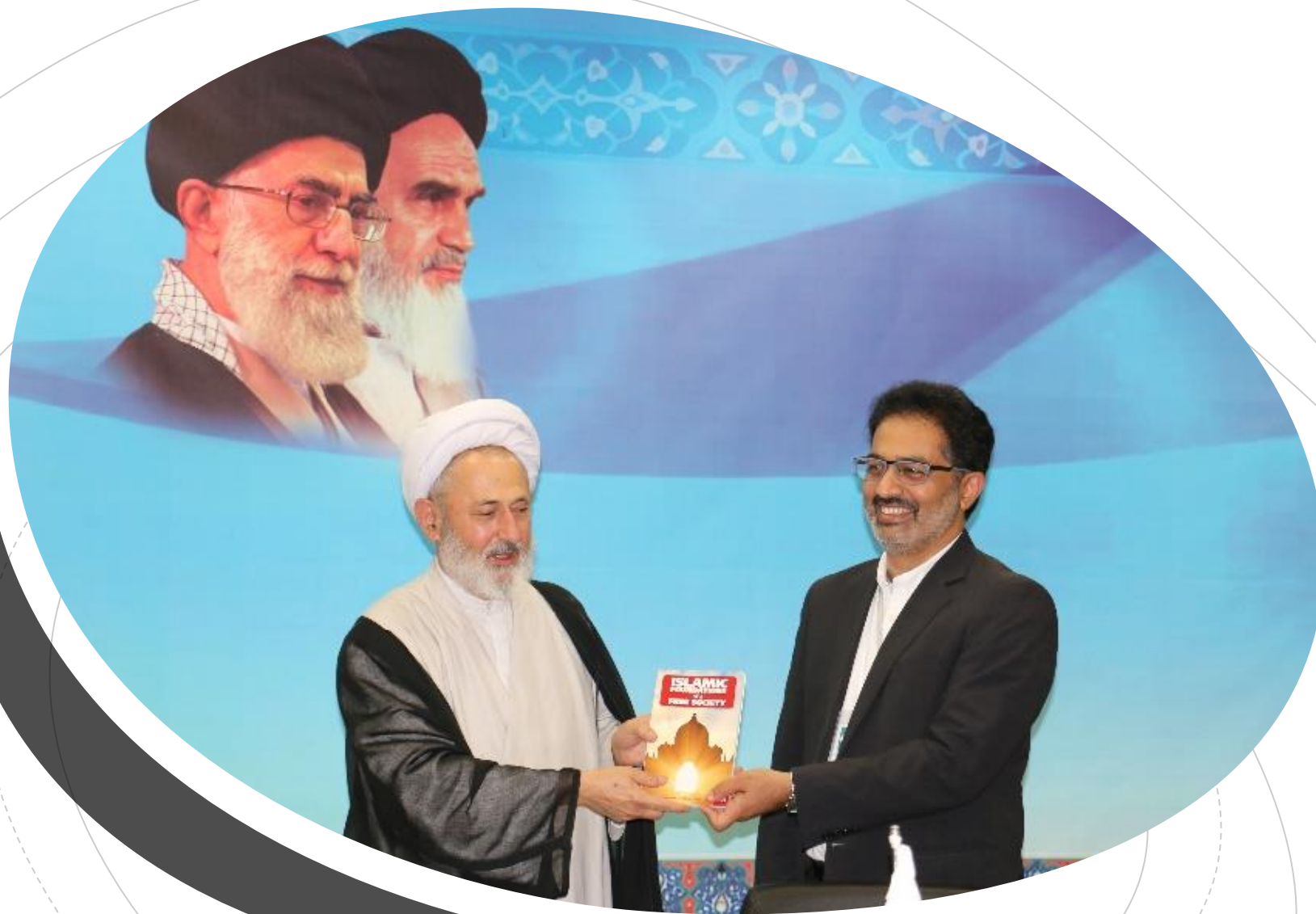
### **Virtual Discussion Group with Students for Liberty**

Beginning February 2017, the book was the topic of a 3 session, online discussion by Students for Liberty with Ali Salman as the discussion leader and with 15 participants drawn mostly from US but also including other countries.

### **Part of Asia Liberty Forum**

In February 2017 there was a debate on it at the Asia Liberty Forum in Mumbai with an audience of around 100, in which an exclusive panel was organized on this which was attended by then Chairman of Istanbul Network Wan Saiful Wan Jan.





Presenting a copy  
of the book to  
Hojat Al Islam  
Hakimian, in  
Qom, Iran

# Afghanistan: Islam & Liberty Discourses

- Afghan Economics and Legal Studies Organisation has been on forefront of promoting a dialogue on Islam and Liberty in Afghanistan.
- The book “Islamic Foundations of a Free Society” whose translation and publication in Farsi had been funded by the Network for Free Society.







## Nigeria: Bringing Christians and Muslims together

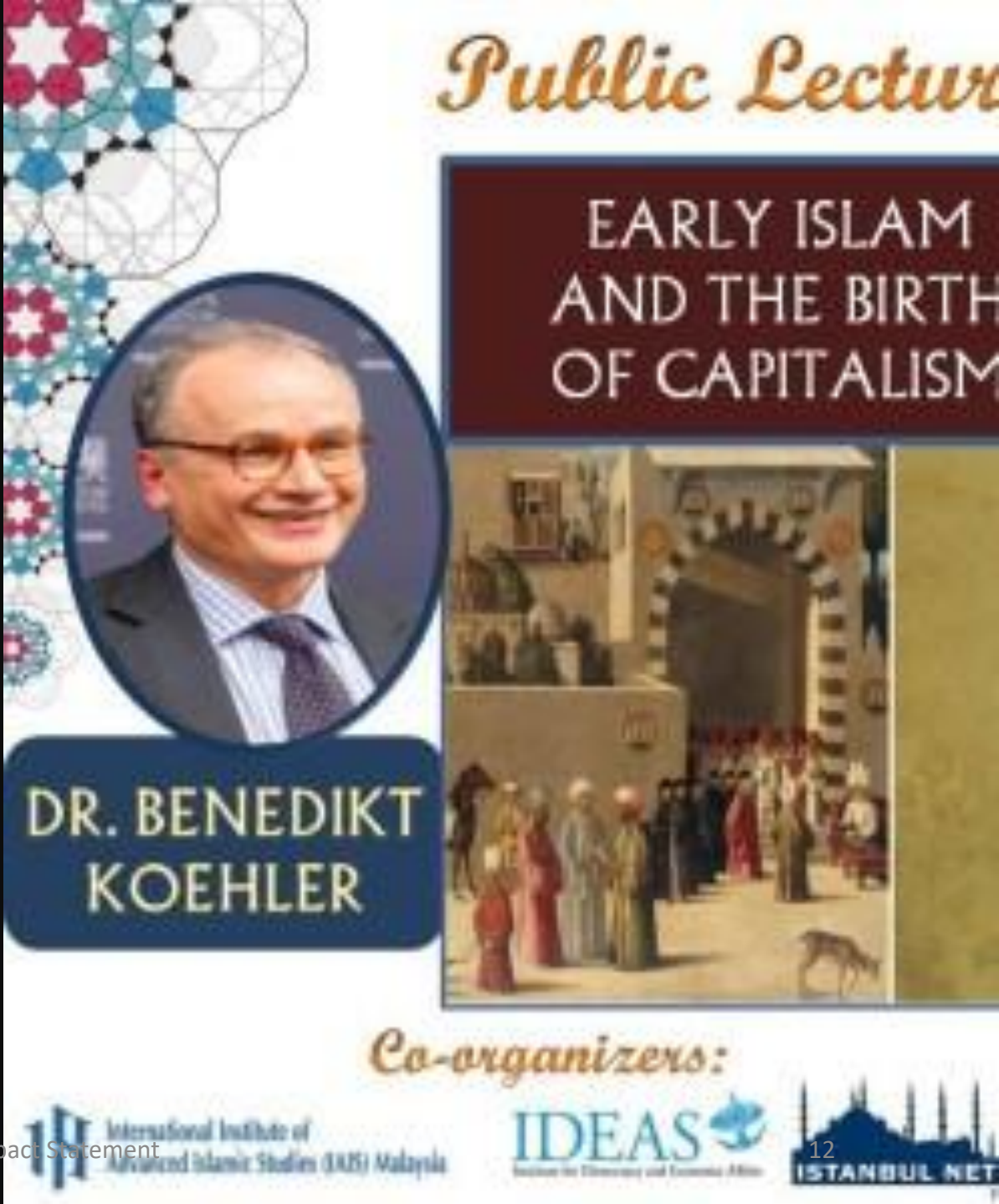
A group called African Christians for Freedom ran a day-long seminar in Maidura, Borno state, Nigeria on religious tolerance, freedom and cooperation in Africa with a great group of 45 Christians and Muslims who joined in enthusiastically. Those discussions at earlier ILN conferences continue to be of interest around the world and here with both Christians and Muslims in Nigeria.



**Malaysia:**  
**Book Tour for the author of “Early Islam  
and the Birth of Capitalism”**

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- In February 2016, Istanbul Network in collaboration with IDEAS (Malaysia) organized a lecture tour by the historian Dr. Benedikt Koehler, author of “Early Islam and the Birth of Capitalism”. These activities included a colloquium on Islam and Market Economy, public lecture at various institutes and universities and lecture on Islam and Capitalism hosted by Sekolah Pemikir Jalanan.
- 



The poster features a circular portrait of Dr. Benedikt Koehler, a man with glasses and a suit, smiling. To the right of the portrait is a painting depicting a historical scene with people in traditional attire. The background of the poster includes a decorative geometric pattern in the top left corner.

*Public Lecture*

**EARLY ISLAM  
AND THE BIRTH  
OF CAPITALISM**

**DR. BENEDIKT  
KOEHLER**

*Co-organizers:*

**IDEAS**  
Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs

**ISTANBUL NET**

International Institute of  
Advanced Islamic Studies (IIAIS) Malaysia



# Turkey: Translation of “Early Islam and the Birth of Capitalism”

- ILN Council member Ozlem Caglar arranged for Dr. Benedikt Koehler’s book on Islam and Capitalism to be translated into Turkish and published by the Liberte Publishers in Ankara and he spoke on the subject in Turkey during June 2016: [here](#)





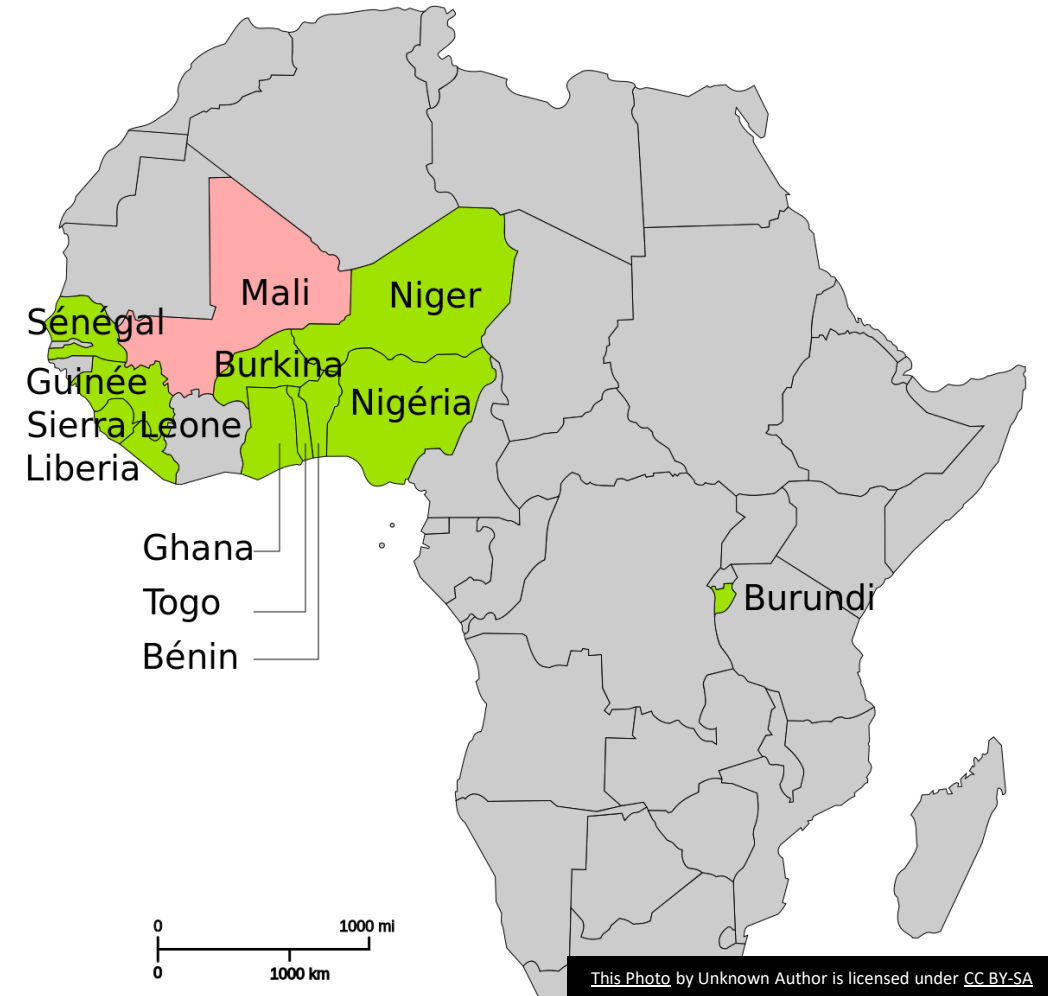
# From ideas to people

Some glimpses of our impact

# Mali:

## Formation of New Think Tanks

- At the second meeting in Istanbul in 2014 Joel Hirst, who was nation building for the United Nations in Mali, met Dr. Nouh El-Harmouzi, who as a result took a group from the Arab Center to undertake outreach work in Mali. After several visits the very active think tank Think Peace was founded and is now promoting freedom in Mali themselves: [here](#)
- Another member of that first group that went from Morocco to Mali was Zineb ben Alla who subsequently formed another group in Mali, TICVE (The Transnational Initiative for Countering Violent Extremism). It has been active in Mali and also in the US and Morocco making the case for an end to violent extremism. They were subsequently in the UN in NY: <http://www.ticve.org/>.



## Talk on democracy and rule of law in Turkey at Kuala Lumpur

- On 30th of October 2016, Istanbul Network for Liberty organized a talk by Dr. Bican Sahin at Kuala Lumpur, who is the Chairman of the Freedom Research Association in Turkey, and also an associate professor at Hacettepe University. The event was attended by a mixed group including students, journalists, activists and diplomats. During his talk, Dr. Sahin spoke on the future of freedom, rule of law and democracy in Turkey in the aftermath of Turkey's failed coup d'état.





# Morocco: Capacity Building

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- Our Programme Officer, Hakan Sahin attended the Arab Liberty Festival and Mena Think-Tank Training in Rabat, Morocco in 2017. He gave small speeches at the festival about the problems of centralized higher education and the importance of market economy in Early Islam.



# Our conferences inspire academics...

- Dr. Ali Hassannia is Assistant Professor, Department of Qur'an and Hadith Studies, Shahed University of Iran. He has a PhD in Theology and Islamic Studies and has published multiple papers in Persian, Arabic and English.
- We invited Dr. Ali Hasannia from Iran in our 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference and in 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference to present his papers. Inspired by our themes, he has engaged some of his students to write papers exploring these ideas in peculiar Iranian context.



# Iran: Research & Dialogue on Liberty

In 2018, ILN organized its first residential workshop in Qom, Iran, which was attended by academics from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Dr. Janas Khan teaches Islamic Studies at Malakand University Pakistan. He later started a process of doing a post-doc in Iran after getting exposure to different interpretations of Quran.





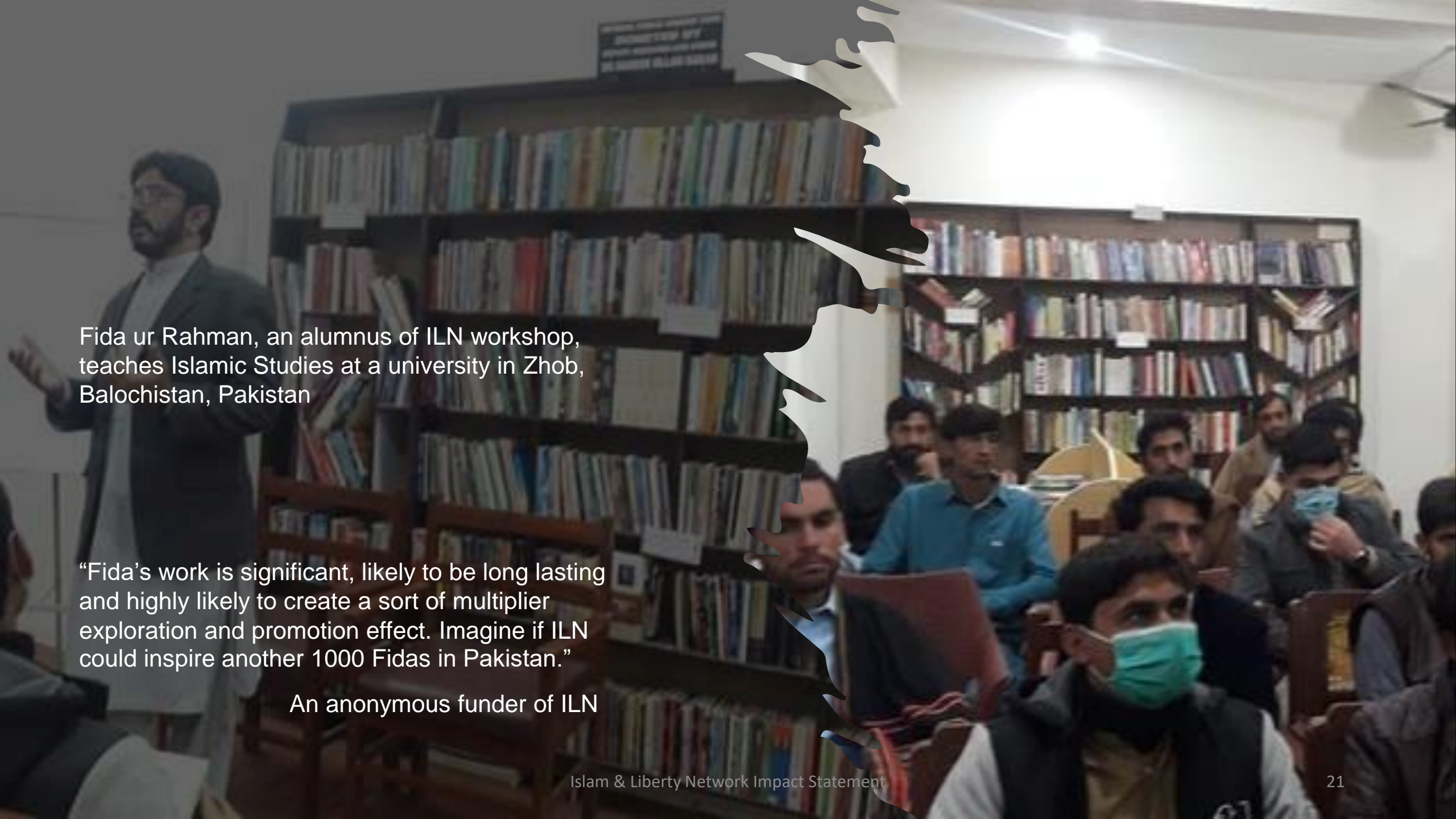
# Tunisia:

## Recruiting talent...

- In 2019, ILN organized its second residential workshop in Tunisia which was attended by academics, civil society members and researchers from Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.
- This workshop was attended, amongst others, by Tasnim Idriss, who is an English teacher and an active civil society member. Inspired by ILN mission, she volunteered to work for social media management. This then changed into her joining the ILN staff.
- The workshop was also attended by Tunisian politician Amel Azouz who was then invited in our 7th International Conference on the Islamic Case for Religious Liberty in Jakarta. Her powerful presentation made a successful case for religious freedom through a constitutionalist and democratic process.







Fida ur Rahman, an alumnus of ILN workshop, teaches Islamic Studies at a university in Zhob, Balochistan, Pakistan

“Fida’s work is significant, likely to be long lasting and highly likely to create a sort of multiplier exploration and promotion effect. Imagine if ILN could inspire another 1000 Fidas in Pakistan.”

An anonymous funder of ILN



# Localizing the message of Islam and Liberty in Pakistan

- In 2020, ILN organised a national workshop for religious scholars, social scientists and civil society members from Pakistan to discuss the principles of religious, political and economic freedom in an Islamic context. Inspired by the workshop, discussions and setting, the participants have suggested to form Pakistan chapter and carry on the mission to focus on specific problems that Pakistani society experiences.
- **Short Course for Ismaili Muslims in Pakistan**
- In 2016, Ali Salman ran a short course “Foundations of Liberal Democracy and Market Economy in Islam” in Islamabad to a group of students from Ismaili Muslims in which he used some of the essays published in the IEA book “The Islamic Foundations of a Free Society” in the reader.



# ILN Council

<https://islamandlibertynetwork.org/islam-and-liberty-network-council/>



**Mohammed Amin**



**Linda Whetstone**



**Ali Salman**



**Souad Adnane**



**Shamshir Alam**



**Ozlem Yilmaz**



**Dženan Smajić**  
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**Mohamed Machine-Chian**  
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**Mustafa Akyol**  
Global Fellow



**Muhamad Ikhsan**  
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ILN Fellows (1/2)  
<https://islamandlibertynetwork.org/islam-and-liberty-fellows/>





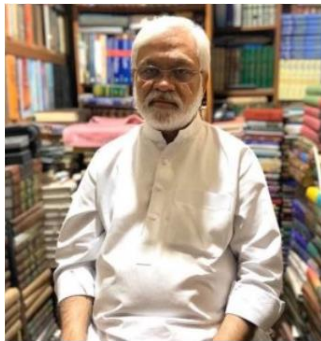
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India



**Dr. HJ Shad Saleem Farouqui**  
Malaysia



**Aymen Boughanmi**  
Tunisia



**Mohsin Naqvi**  
Pakistan



**Dr. Husnul Amin**  
Pakistan

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UK



**Dr. Atilla Yayla**  
Turkey



**Dr. Hicham El Moussaoui**  
Morocco

**ILN Advisory Board**  
<https://islamandlibertynetwork.org/advisory-board/>



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Project Coordinator

## ILN Team



# Call for Action

