

Celebrating 10 Years of Islam & Liberty in the Contemporary World

Introduction

International Islam & Liberty Conference is our flagship annual event exploring and promoting a Muslim case for freedom in the economic, political and religious realms in Muslim majority countries. The discussions in the conference have three tracks: history, theory and practice. It is a two-day event featuring scholarly lectures, presentations, networking sessions and panel discussions. Researchers, entrepreneurs, journalists, academics, politicians and activists from different countries participate, share their stories and form new coalitions.

Recap of last three conferences

Our 8th Conference is a special event as it follows three successive conferences held in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively on democratic, economic and religious dimensions in the context of Islam and Muslim experiences. Our 5th Conference held in Kuala Lumpur “Democratic Transitions in the Muslim World” came out with a message stating that the discussion on compatibility between Islam and democracy should be upgraded to empirical discussions, since most of the populous Muslim-majority countries have already embraced democracy. Our 6th Conference in Islamabad “Building Islamic Foundations for Open Market” revisited classical institutions in the Muslim history that propelled wealth creation. Our 7th Conference in Jakarta “The Islamic Case for Religious Freedom” gave a message stating that Islam not only enjoins religious freedom but also preconditions for economic and political freedom. At the end of the 7th Conference, we announced that the intellectual phase of our movement has now matured, and we should move on to deeper discussions on the present situation while continuing largely in an academic mode. Though it would take place after missing 2020 due to the Covid-19, our 8th Conference provides a perfect opportunity for the second phase of our journey- taking a closer look at what is happening today and contributing making our world more peaceful and prosperous. Incidentally, our 8th Conference will coincide with 10th year of Islam & Liberty Network.

Special context of our 8th Conference

A unique feature of our 8th Conference is the venue, as it will take place in Bosnia. This is the first time that we are organizing our flagship event outside Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, after the inaugural event in Turkey in 2011. Organizing this conference in Bosnia provides additional dimensions to our debate, particularly with respect to the wave of Islamophobia in the West. The most recent statement by the French President provides the right kind of example. With a multi-religious, harmonious and peaceful community, Bosnia provides a perfect setting for this conference, where different religious communities have been living for decades.

A closer look at the practical dimensions

This conference also aims at exploring practical implications of Islam in the contemporary life such as commerce, banking and property rights. Examples and case studies may be shared, though the purpose is to draw general lessons and not to provide a full technical analysis per se. For example, the institution of waqf played a crucial role in the socio-economic development of the Islamic civilisation, but this institution was nationalised during colonisation and has remained under the state control since then. A revival of waqf can unleash new sources of private charity that can help in educational and financial development of the poorer segments of the population. Some countries like Malaysia and

Turkey have made some advancement in this regard, which can be presented and debated. Another possible discussion could take place with respect to the Gold-backed currency, as traditional Islamic views and Austrian school views on the monetary policy have interesting overlaps.

Major themes

We welcome contributions from academics, researchers, politicians, civil society representatives, lawyers and entrepreneurs. Those who wish to contribute to the conference may choose one of the following themes or questions.

1. What are the good models of inter-faith harmony and religious freedom in today's Muslim-majority countries, and what are the other societies that can learn from them?
2. Where does the Arab Spring stand today and what is the future of democracy in the Arab world?
3. Why are most of Muslim-majority countries poor and how can a different interpretation of Islamic texts improve people's well-being?
4. How can the institution of waqf be revived today and what socio-economic role can it play?
5. Why is Islamophobia on the rise and what is the role that Muslim-majority countries should play?
6. Why do most of the world refugees belong to a Muslim-majority country, and what role can Islamic organizations play in combatting this crisis?
7. Considering Afghanistan, Nigeria and Syria, how can we reduce the conflicts and violence in the name of Islam?
8. How has Islamic Law/Shariah evolved and what is its future and relevance?

Contributions can be in the form of papers (most preferred), presentations or panel discussions format. Papers should be between 4,000 to 6,000 words and should be written in the English language. Selected papers will be published in the form of a book after the conference and ILN has the first right of refusal on the manuscripts presented in the conference.

Conference Dates

The Conference will take place in October 2021. Those interested in participating in the conference should send their abstracts by 31st May 2021. The date of submission for complete papers will be 31st August 2021.

Support for Presenters

Travel and stay for presenters, speakers and session chairs will be supported by ILN.

Conference Participation

Participation is open to all individuals. To meet the costs of the event, there will be a participation fee of \$250 per person, excluding hotel stay and travel. Early bird and group discounts will be available.

Conference Location

ILN 8th International Conference will be held in Bosnia.

Conference Sponsor

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. For inquiries related with sponsoring and participating in the conference, please send an email to Ms. Tasnim Idriss, ILN Editorial Associate (tasnim@islamandlibertynetwork.org).



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