



Concept Note and Agenda

High-Level Forum on Combating Anti-Muslim Discrimination and Hatred

#no2hatred

January 17th 2017

UN Headquarters – ECOSOC Chamber

Sponsors

The Permanent Missions of Canada, the United States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Summary

On January 17th 2017, the Missions of Canada, the United States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations will jointly host a full-day High-Level Forum on Combating anti-Muslim Discrimination and Hatred.

This high-level forum will highlight the growing challenges of anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred in various contexts, and focus on substantive tools for addressing them. Three interactive panels will consider important and complementary tools to combat anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred in anti-discrimination law enforcement, civil society coalition-building, and positive narratives to promote pluralism and inclusion.

Panelists will include government, civil society, and private sector representatives. They will assess the scope of rising anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred worldwide, compare government and private sector responses, share best practices, and provide concrete recommendations for combating anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred.

Schedule

Introductions

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Opening statements from representatives of Canada, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United States of America

Panel I Government policies to combat anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred

10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Representatives from government and international institutions will discuss anti-discrimination policies as a tool for addressing anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred.

- **Dr Ahmed Shaheed** UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief
- **Eric Treene** Special Counsel for Religious Discrimination Principal, U.S. Department Of Justice
- (TBC) Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Canada
- **David Friggieri** Coordinator on combatting anti-Muslim hatred, EU
- **Dermana Seta** Senior Advisor on Anti-Muslim hatred, OSCE ODIHR (TBC)
- Moderator: **Arsalan Suleman** Acting U.S. Special Envoy to the OIC, USA

Short Q&A

Panel II Civil Society Coalition-Building

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

Civil society action is essential to any effort against anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred. Coalitions between Muslim community organizations, other faith-based organizations, activists, and NGOs have proven extremely effective in raising awareness on this issue. This panel will explore best practices for strengthening cooperation and dialogue between a range of civil society groups, including inter-religious groups and interfaith dialogue.

- **Catherine Orsborn**, Shoulder to Shoulder
- **Michael Privot** Director, European Network Against Racism
- **Alfiaz Vaiya** Coordinator, European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup
- **Robert Silverman** Muslim-Jewish Relations Director, American Jewish Committee
- **Alia Hogben** Executive Director, Canadian Council of Muslim Women
- Moderator: **Shada Islam**, Friends of Europe

Short Q&A

Closed Lunch (*on invitation only*)

1:15 – 2:45PM

Keynote speech:

- **Rabbi David N. Saperstein** U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom
- **James Goldston** Executive Director, Open Society Justice Initiative

Ignite Talk

3:00PM – 3:15PM

- **Shaarik H. Zafar** U.S. Special Representative to Muslim Communities

Panel III Positive Narratives to Promote Pluralism and Inclusion

3:15 PM – 4:45 PM

Narratives and portrayals of Islam and Muslims in the media and political debate shape societal views and public opinion. These narratives are sometimes inaccurate or biased, and counter-narratives that emphasize pluralism, shared values of religious freedom and inclusion, and a nuanced understanding of Islam and Muslim communities are vital to combat anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred. This panel will focus on various efforts to present positive narratives to promote pluralism and inclusion.

- **Prof. Engy Abdelkader** Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service
- **Dean Obeidallah** Host, The Dean Obeidallah Show
- **Alex Kronemer** Director, The Sultan and the Saint
- **Zarqa Nawaz** Little Mosque on the Prairie, Laughing all the Way to the Mosque
- **Corinne Box**, Baha'i International Community Canada
- Moderator: **Richard Arbeiter** Director-General, Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion, Global Affairs Canada

Short Q&A

Closing

4:45 PM – 5:15PM

Keynote speech (to be confirmed)