



The Centre Celebrates 40th Anniversary

The Centre had the honour of hosting a visit from His Majesty King Charles III at its 40th anniversary celebration. The Centre was founded in 1985 to promote the multidisciplinary study of Islam and the Muslim world, and to foster cooperation and friendship among peoples. A key founding principle of the Centre was that it should serve as a meeting point between the Islamic and Western worlds of learning, cultivating tolerance and friendship. His Majesty, as The Prince of Wales, graciously consented to become the Patron of the Centre in 1993.

His Majesty's enduring patronage has been an important source of support and inspiration for the Centre's activities. His encouragement over the years has been steadfast, and His Majesty has celebrated almost every important event in the Centre's history: the 10th anniversary at Highgrove, the 15th at St James's Palace, the grant of a Royal Charter by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2012, and the inauguration of the Centre's new building in 2017. It was the Centre's distinct honour to have its Patron present at the celebration of its 40th anniversary.

The anniversary celebration was attended by many guests from near and far, including the Centre's Board of Trustees, the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, academics, students, and well-wishers from a variety of professional backgrounds. It was an occasion for the Centre to reflect, celebrate and renew its commitment



HM King Charles III arriving at the Centre

"The Centre's ongoing commitment to objective scholarship and international cooperation, underpinned by principles of dialogue, deep understanding and mutual respect, is more imperative than ever in today's world. I need hardly say I am extremely heartened that the Centre continues to play such a significant role in that globally critical endeavour."

HM King Charles III

to its founding values and principles. It was also an occasion to give thanks to its Patron, and the support and guidance of its Trustees over many years.

His Majesty was welcomed by the Centre's Director, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford. After a brief tour of the Centre's Kuwait Library, the King graciously gave an address in the Malaysia Auditorium, offering



HM King Charles III with the Trustees

his congratulations to the Centre on its 40th anniversary and all that it has achieved during that time.

His Majesty reflected on the Centre's modest beginnings in a wooden hut on St Cross Road and its expansion into its current, permanent home, which he inaugurated in 2017. His Majesty spoke of his pride and admiration for the Centre's 'unfailing work to broaden understanding of the Islamic world', and emphasized the importance of



HM King Charles III and the Director in the Kuwait Library

the Centre's mission and principles, generously noting that the 'spark of ambition with which the Centre was founded all those years ago remains undimmed'.

The King's address was followed by a note of thanks delivered by the Vice Chancellor. Professor Tracey expressed gratitude to His Majesty for his patronage of the Centre,



HM King Charles III at the podium in the Malaysia Auditorium

and congratulated the Centre and its leadership on its work, particularly the important contributions it continues to make to Oxford's scholarly community and research culture.

After departing the Auditorium, the guest of honour was greeted by local school children, with whose schools the Centre has collaborated on outreach initiatives such as visits to the Centre's mosque and exhibition gallery.

On the occasion of the visit, His Majesty was presented with a scale model of the Centre's permanent building and The



HM King Charles III (centre), (right) Professor Irene Tracey, HRH Prince Turki, (left) Lord Hague, and the Director



HM King Charles III, Lord Hague, the Director, HRH Prince Turki, and Professor Irene Tracey

King Charles III Garden as a token of gratitude for his support over many years.

Following the presentation, the King met the Board of Trustees and members of the Strategy Advisory Committee in the Trustees' Garden. During the reception held in The King Charles III Garden, His Majesty graciously met and conversed with different



Trustees and other esteemed guests in the Auditorium

groups of guests, including interfaith representatives from the University and beyond, members of the diplomatic community, members of the Centre's Academic Advisory committee, Oxford Heads of House, local and international academic colleagues, as well as Centre scholars and staff.

During the reception His Majesty also met alumni from the Centre's Young Muslim Leadership Programme, which was established 20 years ago with support from the then Prince's



A scale model of the Centre's building, presented to His Majesty



His Majesty and HRH Prince Turki



His Majesty, HH Shaikh Mohammed, HE Sultan of Sokoto and the Vice Chancellor



His Majesty, Rt. Hon. Dominic Grieve, HE Sheikha Hind and President Gül



His Majesty with Mr Robert Hannigan and the Director



His Majesty with Lord Khan and guests



His Majesty with the Director

“Since its establishment in 1985 the Centre has contributed significantly to the academic and intellectual life of the University ... This has not only added richness to our community, but has provided a much greater understanding of the Islamic world and its outstanding heritage.”

*Professor Irene Tracey
Vice Chancellor, University of Oxford*

Charities. This flagship leadership programme has been an important area of the Centre’s activity, which has made a lasting impact on the lives of many young British Muslims. The reception provided an ideal opportunity for those connected with the Centre to meet its Patron.

In addition to the reception and the visit from His Majesty, two new trees were planted to mark the milestone anniversary. The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor planted a rowan tree in The King Charles III Garden, and the Trustees planted an ornamental pear tree in the Trustees’ Garden. These new additions to the tranquil environment of the Centre’s gardens will be a lasting reminder of the occasion.



Lord Hague, Professor Irene Tracey and the Director planting a tree



His Majesty, President Gül and Mrs Gül



HH Sheikh Mohammed Al-Sabah, HRH Prince Turki, HE Sheikh Meshal and HRH Prince Faisal.



HRH Prince Turki, Tan Sri Zarinah, Professor Naim, Rt. Hon. Dominic Grieve and HE Sultan of Sokoto



Members of the Board of Trustees



His Majesty welcomed by school children



His Majesty admiring the fountain in The King Charles III Garden

The King Charles III Programme

Promoting Intercivilizational Understanding

For over three decades His Majesty has strongly supported the Centre's commitment to academic excellence and the promotion of intercultural understanding. To honour this longstanding patronage, the Centre has established The King Charles III Programme for Intercivilizational Understanding.

The Programme will continue the Centre's Distinguished Lectures series, which brings esteemed speakers to the Centre, including current and former heads and ministers

of state, senior politicians, diplomats, and academics. It will likewise consolidate the Young Muslim Leadership Programme, organise conferences and roundtables, introduce scholarships and visiting fellowships, and enhance outreach activities.

Together, these areas of activity will ensure the continuation of the Centre's commitment to meeting its goal of promoting a more informed understanding



His Majesty and the Director exiting the King Charles III Wing



His Majesty inaugurating The King Charles III Wing

of Islam and the Muslim world by means of sound scholarship and international academic cooperation, whilst remaining worthy of the patronage that it has received over the past decades.

The Programme will be housed in The King Charles III Wing, which His Majesty inaugurated during his visit. The Wing, like the Centre's building at large, encapsulates a harmony between Western and Islamic traditions of architecture and craftsmanship. It is surrounded by the Fellows' Garden, the Trustee's Garden, and The King Charles III Garden.