

## OUTREACH

### INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

During the year under review distinguished visitors from different countries and international institutions were received at the Centre. They were briefed on the Centre's activities and potential future collaboration was discussed.

They included:

His Majesty The Yang di-Pertuan Agong XV Sultan Muhammad V  
The King of Malaysia

HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman Abdulaziz  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

HRH Prince 'Abdul Mateen ibni Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah  
Brunei Darussalam

Ambassador Idriss Jazairy  
Special Rapporteur to the UN Human Rights Council and Executive Director of The Geneva Centre for the Advancement of Human Rights and Dialogue

HM Raja Zarith Sofiah  
The Queen of Johor, Malaysia

Professor Din Syamsuddin  
Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Indonesia and  
Former Chairman of Central Board of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia

Dr Shaazim Minovarov  
Director, Islamic Civilization Centre, Uzbekistan

HE Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali Al-Madani  
Founding President of Islamic Development Bank, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

HE Dr Zamir Iqbal  
Vice-President, Islamic Development Bank, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
Archbishop of Westminster

Diplomatic representatives from the following countries participated in Centre activities during the year: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Nigeria, Sultanate of Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Republic of Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Republic of Uzbekistan and Yemen.

Visiting Fellowship and Scholarship programmes continue to play a key role in the international outreach of the Centre. Since their inception scholars from over 50 countries have visited the Centre.

Joint conferences with international partners have provided another means of strengthening international links. The Centre continued its partnership with the Securities Commission of Malaysia in organizing the Roundtable on Islamic Finance and also organized conferences with the Muslim World League and the Atlantic Council.

Collaboration continued with the Islamic Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization. The OCIS–ISESCO Prize for promoting peace and tolerance was awarded to UNESCO at a prize-giving ceremony in Paris in September 2017.

Professor Sir David Clary, Centre Trustee and President of Magdalen College, and the Director attended the first Organization of Islamic Cooperation’s summit on Science and Technology in Astana, Kazakhstan, in September 2017. The visit formed part of a growing research interest on Islam and Science.

In September 2017 the Director attended the Second Symposium of the Scientific Chairs and Centers Abroad (SSCCA).

In October 2017 the Centre hosted a number of Russian Muslim Scholars (theologians, philosophers and Middle East specialists) at the Centre.

In November 2017 the Director and the Registrar attended the 10th Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, hosted in Khartoum by ISESCO and the Sudan Ministry of Culture. Focused on ‘Culture and the Islamic City of the Future’, the meeting provided an opportunity to explore new areas of cooperation with ISESCO and a number of member countries.

HE Professor Dr Jamal Sanad Al-Suwaidi, Director-General, The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, Abu Dhabi, introduced his recently published memoirs at a book signing ceremony at the Centre.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, HE Mr Ilham Aliyev had designated 2017 as the ‘Year of Islamic Solidarity: Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue’. As part of the celebrations, the Mufti of the Caucasus, Allahshukur Pashazedeh, hosted a conference in Baku in December 2017 on inter-faith understanding, which was attended by the Director and by scholars, scientists, community and religious leaders from across the globe.

In December the Director attended, in Tashkent, a series of meetings with academics and government representatives including the Prime Minister of the Republic, His Excellency Mr Abdulla Aripov. The purpose of these meetings was to consolidate the ties between the Centre and academic Institutions in Uzbekistan.

In February the Director attended the 13th Doha Interfaith Dialogue Conference (DICID) held in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Qatar on Religions and Human Rights.

In February the Centre welcomed a delegation from Uzbekistan led by the Director of the Islamic Civilization Centre, Dr Shaazim Minovarov. Accompanied by Ambassador Alisher Shaykhov, the delegation comprised representatives of several leading academic institutions and followed up the Centre Director's visit to Tashkent.

In February the Centre was honoured to host a visit by a most distinguished alumnus HM Sultan Muhammad V, Yang di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia. During his visit His Majesty toured the facilities of the Centre's building and signed the Distinguished Visitors Book. He was briefed by the Director on the Centre's current plans and planted a tree in The Prince of Wales Garden as a memorial to his visit.

In February, the Director of the King Salman Centre for Historical and Civilisation Research Studies of the Arabian Peninsula, Dr Abdullah Al Subaiy visited the Centre to discuss opportunities to cooperate on a variety of research initiatives. Since the visit a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by both parties to hold a forum during the next academic year on a science-based approach to historical research.

In March the Director, Mr Jeremy Jones and Dr George Malagaris attended the opening of the Al-Biruni Library in Tashkent.

In March the Director, the Bursar, Dr Afifi Al-Akiti and Tan Sri Zarina Anwar travelled to Malaysia to attend the Joint Conference with the Securities Commission of Malaysia on 'Enhancing the Value of Islamic Capital Market through Social and Impact Investment'. In addition the Director and Dr Mustafa also interviewed students for the Merdeka Scholarship Awards.

In May the Centre received a delegation from UAE to discuss celebrations for the 'Year of Zayed'.

#### **THE SULTAN OF BRUNEI PRIZE IN ISLAMIC FINANCE**

On 5 April the Centre hosted the award ceremony for the Sultan of Brunei International Prize. This Prize was created by HM Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah in 1992, and the Centre was greatly honoured to be entrusted with its administration. The award recognises excellence and achievement in different areas of academic activity. This year it focused on outstanding contributions to the development of the theory and practice of Islamic Finance. An international jury of eminent persons had unanimously recommended that the prize should be awarded to the Islamic Development Bank for its outstanding contribution to the development and practice of Islamic finance and economics over more than 40 years. The jury also concluded that a special award should be made, in a personal capacity, to HE Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali Al-Madani, the Bank's founding Director, who led the institution with great distinction until his retirement in 2016. His Royal Highness Prince Abdul Mateen presented the awards on His Majesty's behalf at a special ceremony in the Centre's auditorium. Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali Al-Madani was in Oxford to receive the award in person and spoke in his address of his experiences in developing the IDB and his appreciation of the distinction. The award to the IDB as an institution was received by its Vice President, HE Dr Zamir Iqbal, on behalf of its current President, HE Dr Bandar Al Hajjar.

The Islamic Development Bank was founded in August 1974 specifically to foster the economic development and social progress of member countries and of Muslim communities in non-member countries. The present membership consists of 57 countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation that contribute to the Bank's subscribed capital. The Bank participates in equity capital, grants loans for productive projects, and facilitates trade among member countries. It also manages special funds and trusts for specified objectives that include assisting Muslim communities in non-Muslim countries

In all of its activities, the IDB has adopted, encouraged and tested the principles of Islamic economics. In so doing it has played a major role in developing the field theoretically while growing the range and scale of Islamic financing within financing activity as a whole.

The award of the Sultan of Brunei International Prize on this occasion will further encourage the Centre's growing research interest in Islamic finance. In recent years the establishment of its Islamic Finance Unit has consolidated the Centre's past efforts and helps to orient future initiatives through the development of an international platform for debate, dialogue, research and publication. The aim of the Unit is to bring together specialists and reach out to stakeholders worldwide, building networks at all levels.

#### THE OCIS-ISESCO PRIZE

An international jury constituted to determine the winner of the OCIS-ISESCO Prize scrutinized a number of very strong nominations of individuals and institutions that had been received. The jury was unanimous in its appreciation for the exceptional importance and distinction of the work of UNESCO in recent years, notably UNESCO's 'Different Aspects of Islamic Culture' collection published earlier in the year.

At a prize-giving ceremony in Paris in September 2017, UNESCO was presented with the OCIS-ISESCO Prize for Educators, in recognition of its contribution to the Promotion of Peace and Co-existence. The Prize shield was formally accepted by the Director-General of UNESCO, Mrs Irina Bokova.