



Muslims in the Future

*“Findings and Analysis’ from the Pew Report
on the Global Muslim Population in 2030”*

Tuesday 7th June 2011

Shangri-La Hotel, Bain al-Jesrain, Abu Dhabi

Detailed Speaker Biographies

Dr. Amir al-Islam

Amir Al-Islam received his Ph.D. from New York University in African American and African Diasporic History. He is currently an Assistant Professor at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, UAE. He formally held the post of Distinguished Lecturer on African American History, Islam, and World Civilization at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York (CUNY) in Brooklyn, NY. Prior to joining CUNY, Professor Al-Islam worked for 15 years as the Coordinator of Religious Affairs and Community Outreach of the Muslim World League Office to the United Nations. He is the former Secretary General of the World Council of Muslims for Interfaith Relations, U.S.A., served as Secretary General of the World Conference on Religion and Peace USA, and is a founding Director of the Joint African / African American Muslim Commission on HIV/AIDS and Orphaned Children, located at the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood in Harlem, New York.

He has helped facilitate collaboration among people of various religious, ethnic and culturally diverse backgrounds internationally through his participation in peace and interfaith initiatives such as the UN Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen, 1994; the World Conference of Religious Leaders at the Vatican, 1995; the UN World Habitat II, Istanbul, 1996; the Millennium World Peace Summit at the UN, New York, 2001; and two meetings of the World Parliament of Religions in South Africa, 2000 and in Spain, 2004. During Sierra Leone’s civil strife in the 1990’s, he helped establish one of their first interfaith councils in that country.

Professor Al-Islam assisted in organizing the first delegation of Muslim leaders to visit Auschwitz, Poland during the 1990’s. He also served as Senior Advisor for several World Youth Peace Summits convened from 2004 through 2007 to address critical social issues, including those sponsored by the World Council of Religious Leaders in Bangkok and Sarajevo, and the Global Peace Initiative of Women in the U.S. and India in 2008.

Shaykh Walead Mohammed Mosaad

Education and Cultural Projects Manager at the Tabah Foundation in Abu Dhabi since 2005. Before joining Tabah, he was a teacher and Muslim chaplain at Rutgers University and an associate Imam at Dallas Central Mosque in Richardson, Texas. He has a bachelors degree from Rutgers University, a masters degree from the University of Liverpool, and a degree from the prestigious Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, where he received written authorisations from the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Ali Gomaa, to transmit traditional Islamic knowledge. He has also studied at a traditional seminary in Damascus, Syria.

Through his work at Tabah Foundation he has worked extensively with Western Muslim communities. He is currently leading a project on creating a balanced curriculum of education for converts to Islam and continues to teach at intensive summer courses in North America and Europe.

He resides in Abu Dhabi with his wife and five children.



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Dr Brian Grim

Senior researcher and director of cross-national data at the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, specializing in international religious demography, measurement of global restrictions on religion and cross-national social regulation of religion. Brian also is a principle investigator for the international religious demography project at Boston University’s Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs.

Immediately prior to joining the Pew Forum, Brian managed the international data initiative for the Association of Religion Data Archives housed at Penn State University and funded by the John Templeton Foundation and the Lilly Endowment. He was also a faculty research associate at Penn State’s Survey Research Center, where he was responsible for the planning, initiation and budgeting of all modes of survey research, including focus groups.

Brian has extensive overseas experience. Before joining the Pew Forum, he worked for 20 years as an educator, researcher and development coordinator in China, the former USSR, Kazakhstan, Malta, other places in Europe and the Middle East. His research interests include quantitative measurement of international religious regulation, religious freedom and socio-religious conflict. His 2006 publication with Roger Finke in the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Religious Research on Religion* provides indexes of religious regulation and favoritism for 195 countries, and in an August 2007 article in *American Sociological Review* as well as in a 2011 book, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religion Persecution and Conflict in the 21st Century* (Cambridge University Press), Brian and Finke analyze the impact of restricted religious freedom on the level of religion-related conflict. Brian is co-editor with Todd M. Johnson of the World Religion Database, an online offering of the Brill publishing company that provides international religious demographic statistics and sources for 238 countries. Brian was also a visiting researcher at Georgetown University’s Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and a research affiliate with the Population Research Institute at Penn State University.

Brian received his Ph.D. and an M.A. in sociology from the Pennsylvania State University, an M.A. in teaching English to speakers of other languages from William Carey International University in Pasadena, Calif. and a B.A. in sociology from the University of Delaware. He also completed formal language studies at Inlingua Sprachschule in Germany and Kazakh State University, and theological studies at The Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Dr Mehtab Karim

Visiting senior research fellow at the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, specializing in global Muslim demographics. Immediately before joining the Pew Forum, he was a professor of demography at the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan. Mehtab’s earlier appointments include: visiting senior fellow at the Office of Population Research, Princeton University, N.J.; research fellow at the Asia Research Center, London School of Economics, U.K.; lead researcher at the Demographic & Health Survey, Calverton, Md.; on behalf of the World Bank, Technical Advisor to Minister of Planning & Development, Government of Sindh in Karachi, Pakistan; and research fellow at the East-West Center in Hawaii. Additionally, on several occasions he served as a consultant to the United Nations in New York and the World Bank in Washington, D.C. He has done extensive research on demographic issues in Muslim countries and in South Asia, edited four volumes of conference proceedings on population issues in Pakistan and in Asia, and co-edited a book, *Islam, the State and Population* (2005).

Mehtab received his doctorate in Sociology/Demography from Cornell University, master’s degree in Social Sciences from the University of Chicago and bachelor’s degree in Sociology & Economics from the University of Karachi, Pakistan. He is married to Rukhsana and they have two daughters and one son.