

United Nations Honors Muslim World League's Mohammad Al-Issa for Global Diplomacy and Combating Hate

GENEVA _ Sheikh Mohammad Al-Issa, the trailblazing interfaith leader of the Muslim World League, was awarded an honorary doctorate by the United Nations on Monday in recognition of his groundbreaking work as a global peacemaker.

In honoring Dr. Al-Issa, the U.N.'s University for Peace cited the MWL secretary general's "outstanding efforts in supporting international diplomacy, promoting friendship and cooperation among people, and effective endeavors in combating hate."

The award was bestowed upon Dr. Al-Issa at a ceremony at the United Nations' European headquarters in Geneva.

"It is the sacred duty of all of us to promote peace and harmony in this world," Dr. Al-Issa said at the event. "I'm greatly appreciative to receive this honor, and we must all continue striving with all our effort to build coexistence and true partnerships among the peoples of this world, for today and the next generations."

U.N. Under Secretary General Larbi Djacta hailed Dr. Al-Issa "as a leading global voice on moderate Islam" who has "advanced constructive cooperation and counteracted extremism." He cited several of Dr. Al-Issa's major diplomatic achievements in recent years:

- Convening more than 1,200 Islamic scholars for the Charter of Makkah in May 2019 to advance the principles of moderate Islam and interfaith partnership;
- Leading the most senior Islamic delegation ever to Auschwitz in January 2020;
- Guiding Buddhist and Muslim religious leaders in Sri Lanka to promote healing and integration in the wake of the country's deadly Easter attacks;
- Finalizing an unprecedented partnership between MWL and the Holy See, which led to the most senior Vatican official visit ever to Saudi Arabia
- Forging a peace and solidarity agreement among representatives of the Abrahamic religions in France

- And, most recently, spearheading the Declaration of Peace by Afghan and Pakistani scholars and government representatives that provides a roadmap toward stability in Afghanistan

Francisco Rojas, Rector of the U.N.'s University for Peace, hailed Dr. Al-Issa for his commitment to "bringing global awareness to Islam's true message of empathy, understanding and cooperation among all people."

Rojas said Dr. Al-Issa has "been a trailblazer in building new partnerships among different communities, faiths and nations," and noted that his institution cooperates with MWL to promote interreligious dialogue with leaders in the global Jewish and Christian communities.

The University for Peace is an academic institution within the U.N. system, whose honorary president is the U.N. secretary-general.

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