
MWL Partnerships Letter from Undersecretary for Executive Affairs

MWL and its Partnership with UNHCR

An Enduring Alliance in Uncertain Times: MWL and WHO

The MWL Partners with UNESCO, ECOSOC and UNRWA



MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE PARTNERSHIPS



We are more concerned with the relationships the MWL has built with other organizations that have the infrastructure to reach the most needy around the world, or that have some specialized expertise. By forming partnerships with these organizations, MWL's relief efforts have greater force and effect."



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Muslim World League

Recent Activities in Review



December 06

Dr. Al-Issa was a keynote speaker at the opening ceremony of the 8th Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, held at Expo 2020 Dubai. Dr. Al-Issa stressed the importance of the Charter of Makkah to promote mutual coexistence among the Muslim world.

Dr. Al-Issa met the Ambassador of Norway to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Thomas Lid Ball, to discuss the importance of strengthening communication between nations and peoples to achieve increased understanding and cooperation.

December 09



Dr. Al-Issa hosted the Ambassador of the European Union to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Patrick Simonet, to discuss the importance of enhancing civilized communication between the Islamic world and EU countries.

December 13



Dr. Al-Issa met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Burundi to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nahayo Jacques Ya'coub. He noted the active efforts of the Muslim World League and highlighted the true values of Islam to unite people around the world.

December 13



December 14

In the presence of French Parliament Member Amelia Lakrafi, Dr. Al-Issa met with the international French activist Latifa Ibn Ziaten. She lauded Dr. Al-Issa's efforts in promoting harmony and educating youth around the world to confront the ideas of extremism and terrorism.

The Muslim World League participated in the Dakar International Fair under the theme, "Promoting Agribusiness for Sustainable Economic and Social Development," in which the MWL promoted its recent sustainable development initiatives and humanitarian efforts.

December 20



December 22

Dr. Al-Issa met with the Ambassador of the Republic of India to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, who invited Dr. Al-Issa to visit India.



Zakat:

Beyond Almsgiving to Spiritual Wealth

We know that Zakat, or almsgiving, is one of the five pillars of Islam, and that all Muslims, particularly those who are blessed with means, have an obligation to give alms each year. The Holy Quran is very clear about this, and even specifies the categories of people to whom alms should be given: the poor, the needy, people who collect zakat to distribute to others, those whose hearts are to be won over, captives, people who are burdened with debt, for the cause of Allah, and travelers. The poor and needy are listed first, and they have the highest priority.

Each year, Muslims give generously to help others—in their communities and beyond, directly or through relief organizations or mosques. Many people fulfill their zakat obligation during Ramadan, when many Islamic relief and charitable organizations make special appeals. Muslims can be proud of their relationship with charity, which is both an obligation and a rich tradition, a part of both our faith and our culture.

But if we dig deeper into the meaning of Zakat, we can ask ourselves, “What are we really called upon to do and to be?” What is the true spirit of Zakat? Does God expect us to give alms each year, or even each month in fulfillment of our obligation, or is does he ask us for more?

Truly, Zakat has two purposes: to aid the poor and the needy, certainly, but also to enrich the spirit of the giver. The obligation to give reminds us that we are intimately connected to our fellow human beings. The donation is the physical act that reminds us to love, to be kind, to be generous in spirit as well as in coin. It

calls on us to be better human beings, the best we can be. This is the “cleansing” of which the Quran speaks.

In this issue, we write about the works of charity and relief around the world carried out by the Muslim World League and, importantly, it’s affiliate the International Islamic Relief Organization, a subject we have covered in other issues. This time, however, we are more concerned with the relationships the MWL has built with other organizations that have the infrastructure to reach the most needy around the world, or that have some specialized expertise. By forming partnerships with these organizations, MWL’s relief efforts have greater force and effect.

It is also important for the Muslim World League to reach out beyond Islamic communities in our relief and charitable efforts. There is much need among the faithful, but innocent people the world over are suffering as well, and the Quran calls on us to help them. Zakat calls on us to go where we are needed. In this sense, Zakat is very much a part of the MWL’s mission to promote peace, understanding, tolerance and mutual respect among people of different faiths and cultures.

When Zakat ceases to be just almsgiving, when it becomes a guide and a way for us to live every day with a generous spirit and an open heart, we inspire others. And that is one important way to build peace and understanding in our troubled world.

The Editors

MWL Partnerships Letter

from Undersecretary for Executive Affairs

With this issue, we reassert our commitment to international aid organizations dedicated to providing food, shelter, and health services to refugees, the poor, and the oppressed.

The MWL aligns itself with the mission and goals of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and in particular, the Live, Learn and Participate (LLP) program. We are also committed to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

A key component of these relationships is the cooperation agreement signed by UNHCR and the MWL in which the MWL has made donations to support the UNHCR’s LLP program.

We attempt to aid the thousands of migrants and refugees risking their lives on dangerous journeys where they are often preyed upon by smugglers and human traffickers while hoping to reach Europe. In addition, other individuals are seeking protection and employment in North African countries that are in desperate need of aid.

The LLP programs focus on providing a streamlined means and upgraded protection and care along common routes used by refugees and migrants. This means delivering proactive management of care, education, and social services to children and young people. The MWL and UNHCR also work to empower



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young people and children traveling along the central Mediterranean route by improving access to information to safeguard their health and well-being, along with peer-to-peer counseling.

The MWL also donated to UNICEF to support marginalized children in African and Middle East countries. The donation will help fund the critical needs of children in education, social protec-

tion, water and sanitation improvements, and healthcare.

This vital and strong relationship between UNICEF and the MWL has seen success in establishing programs for children throughout Africa and the Middle East. For example, over 90,000 children and their families in South Darfur have benefited from donations that help mitigate food shortages, lack of social services, and the ever-present threat of floods



and drought. Host communities and camps where these displaced persons live can be provided with vital healthcare services, food, and basic social services that recipients otherwise might not have.

In addition to these vital and sustained contributions, the MWL is also providing financial and staff support, and delivering humanitarian aid to refugees and displaced persons in an agreement with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East.

Dr. Al-Issa, secretary-general of the MWL, said in a speech at the Geneva Global Solidarity Conference to confront Covid-19, that international aid organizations will face significant hurdles in cooperation to succeed against the pandemic unless awareness is raised among aid groups and individuals.

Among the attendees at the conference, there were representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Attendees agreed that religious leaders hold a key role in raising awareness to deal with the pandemic.

“Our efforts in confronting the pandemic stem from our Islamic values with their comprehensive humanity without discrimination,” said Dr. Al-Issa. He added that distribution



The MWL’s commitment to the UNCHR, UNICEF, and The UNRWA to aid refugees and displaced persons, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to beat Covid-19 is testament to the solidarity that these aid organizations have demonstrated to work together to mitigate global suffering.”

of in-kind assistance with the cooperation of governments, as well as medical equipment to hospitals, and food for vulnerable populations to over 30 countries with no barriers to any religious or ethnic group is vital in successfully aiding needy people.

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Dr. Al-Issa speaking at the Muslim Peace Forum hosted at Expo 2020 Dubai.

The Muslim Peace Forum: A Vision of Inclusive Citizenship

The 8th Annual Muslim Peace Forum, also known as the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, was hosted at Expo 2020 Dubai in early December. The Muslim Peace Forum was founded to gather senior leaders from around the world to collaborate on ways to instill peace and harmony throughout Muslim society. Each year, the forum suggests a theme for the three-day conference based on the needs and current events of the world.

The title of the 2021 forum and the theme of the conference was “Inclusive Citizenship: From Mutual Coexistence to Shared Conscience.” Considering the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic, rising rates of global inequality, and increasing polarization across societies, the theme was established to explore whether citizenship could be a force to protect all Muslims and include them in society, no matter their religious beliefs or dogmas. Referring to sacred texts, traditions,





The theme of the Forum was Inclusive Citizenship: From Mutual Coexistence to Shared Conscience.

Dr. Al-Issa sitting among other Muslim leaders from around the world at the Muslim Peace Forum.

and values, the participants were tasked with building a comprehensive vision of inclusivity for the Muslim world.

Dr. Al-Issa, Secretary-General of the Muslim World League, was invited to be the keynote speaker at the Forum's opening ceremony. Kicking off the forum, Dr. Al-Issa set the tone for the work that lay ahead and detailed the importance of an all-encompassing, comprehensive citizenship. The Muslim World League has been dedicated to this idea of an inclusive sense of citizenship since its establishment. Over the years, the League has focused much of its efforts and resources on interfaith work, having made great strides in uniting Muslims from different schools of thought, as well as followers of different religions.

In his speech, Dr. Al-Issa emphasized the importance of the forum's mission. He said, "In our diverse, widespread world, we need

this comprehensive dialogue on citizenship because there are many who are missing the dimensions of its meaning and details." As a species, differences are inevitable based on our varying backgrounds, experiences, and cultures. For too long have societies, including Muslim societies, allowed these differences to result in conflict rather than coexistence. Dr. Al-Issa reiterated the notion that citizenship and inclusion can never be reserved for just the majority, or those of a shared belief, although that has often been the case.

Dr. Al-Issa continued by saying, "We should take into consideration the purpose of our true religion, which calls for peace and harmony: to fulfill pledges and covenants, to unite hearts, and to set an equilibrium between interests and evils." All Muslims are encouraged by our Almighty God to practice respect and tolerance with all, even when differences surface. Islam is a peaceful religion that holds

community and belonging at the heart of worship. Dr. Al-Issa reminded those in attendance that the goal should always be to unite people, including Muslim religious minorities and followers of other religions.

An important theme of the speech focused on the obstacles that exist to achieving comprehensive citizenship. Dr. Al-Issa said, "The beliefs around the so-called political Islam are among the impediments to achieving inclusive citizenship, coexistence, and international cohesion." Dr. Al-Issa encouraged the participants to consider this obstacle when constructing a vision towards inclusivity. Political Islam, in all of its forms, creates divisions between fellow Muslims and often leads to extremist views and tendencies. He said that an inclusive citizenship, evolving beyond mutual coexistence, cannot come to fruition if political Islam exists, and he urged the forum members to address this obstacle in their final vision.

As the world continues to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, the Muslim community must come together to take care of one another in a united effort. The Muslim Peace Forum was hosted during a time of need as the pandemic and growing inequality continue to harm and divide the world.

Muslims, guided by the Charter of Makkah's values, should embrace differences among their brothers and sisters and advocate an all-encompassing Muslim community. The Forum and all participants took an impressive first step towards achieving this, but the hard work will now be up to the rest of the Muslim community. As Islam is a religion built upon peace and harmony, the Muslim World League will continue to work towards an inclusive citizenship as a unifying force of Muslims around the world.



Dr Al-Issa speaks at the Expo 2020 Dubai Conference.

MWL and its Partnership with UNHCR

“I would like to start by emphasizing the pride of the Muslim World League in providing its humanitarian services to all, of course, without discrimination in this regard. This is according to a purely humane standard, regardless of their religion, race or other affiliations. I affirm MWL’s pride in its partnership with UNHCR. This partnership has been, and will always be, fruitful, Allah willing, in supporting a large number of refugees or internally displaced persons.” - Dr. Al-Issa

The MWL has a long list of partnerships, and one of the most rewarding is the association with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN’s refugee agency, which began in 2018. Through this partnership, the two groups helped hundreds of thousands of refugees in 2021 alone. The UNHCR “works to ensure that everybody has the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge, having fled violence, persecution, war or disaster at home.” The MWL stands alongside

the UNHCR proudly and supports this mission in numerous ways.

The global climate today is marred by conflict on various levels, and those who find themselves trapped in these conflicts without the means to protect themselves or relocate to safer areas turn to groups like the MWL and UNHCR for help. With the MWL’s help this last year, through Zakat and Sadaqah, the UNHCR was able to provide relief to around 500,000 refugees in ten different countries, most notably Yemen, Bangladesh and Jordan. As one of the pillars of Islam, Zakat promotes and urges charity toward those in need and offers spiritual “cleansing.” While the inspiration for charity may come from a religious foundation, there is no bias in terms of giving. The MWL seeks to provide international relief wherever it is needed.

In December 2021, the MWL and UNHCR released their semi-annual report at the Expo 2020 Dubai Conference. As outlined in the



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— Dr. Mohammad al-Issa



The UN Refugee Agency is one of the MWL’s largest partners and the two work tirelessly to support those in need.

2021 Islamic Philanthropy Mid-Year Report, the Refugee Zakat Fund provided donations to more than 100,000 struggling families. Within this effort, the MWL provided support to the UNHCR’s Live, Learn and Participate (LLP) program, which is aimed at improving access to services and development opportunities for children and youth along what has become known as the Central Mediterranean Route, the route many migrants and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa travel to reach Europe.

Another focus area in 2021 was in northeastern Nigeria, where the Muslim World League provided multiple grants that supplied 3,699 vulnerable children with safety and security under the Child Protection Interventions Project. The hope is that investing in the lives of children through humanitarian means will inspire the next generation of leaders to continue the cycle of giving.



MWL and UNHCR Join Efforts to Assist Refugees through Zakat Donations

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) anticipates overcoming significant challenges in 2022. It continues its joint effort with the Muslim World League to assist refugees through Zakat donations.

UNHCR's Zakat Fund is expected to assist more than 584,000 people in 12 countries with funding from the Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah bin Thani Al Thani Humanitarian Fund, which has provided donations for three consecutive years.

According to UNHCR, 68 percent of the global refugees originate from just five countries: 6.8 million from Syria, 4.1 million from Venezuela, 2.6 million leaving Afghanistan, 2.2 million stemming from South Sudan, and 1.1 million fleeing Myanmar.

By mid-2021, a conservative estimate pegged the number of forcibly displaced people at 84 million and the number of asylum seekers at 4 million. An estimated 35 million, about 42 percent of the total number of displaced people, are children. Moreover, between 2018 and 2020, an estimated 1 million children were born as refugees.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed particular challenges for UNHCR and its partner, the Muslim World League, to effectively reach these refugees. In an interview with the MWL Journal, Khaled Khalifa, UNHCR's Regional Representative to the GCC Countries and Senior Advisor to the High Commissioner on Islamic Philanthropy, said new waves of COVID-19 pose obstacles worldwide.



Khaled Khalifa, Senior Advisor & Representative to the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, UNHCR.

Mishaal Al-Shaalan, MWL's GM of Parliamentary Affairs, Khaled Khalifa, UNHCR Representative to the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, and Somayya Radhwan MWL's GM of Partnerships and Corporate Relations join together to discuss the future of refugee relief.

As 2022 begins and the world continues its struggles against the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, international conflict and other global challenges, groups like the MWL and UNHCR can expect to see their humanitarian relief efforts grow. As Director General of the MWL's International Cooperation and Events Mishaal Al-Shaalan states, "We continuously seek to enhance the MWL's humanitarian role, which is at the core of our tasks and work since our inception. The best way to do that is to develop strategic partnerships with effective humanitarian institutions at the international level, such as the UNHCR"

The relationship has been very fruitful and amicable from both sides. The UNHCR has described the MWL as one of its "most instru-

mental partners" over the past few years and said "it is honoured to partner with such a prestigious institution to collaborate with on various initiatives including the advancement of Islamic Philanthropy in service of displaced communities. UNHCR is committed to maintain and grow the relationship with MWL in order to maximize sustainable impact on vulnerable displaced communities".

While the new year brings with it many problematic and disheartening challenges, it is through partnerships like the one between the MWL and the UNHCR that hope remains. With cooperation and a passion for helping those in need, the global challenges that remain become more and more manageable.



"We cannot deny the serious implications COVID has on the global economic and financial situation, which affects the ability to give and support," Khalifa said. "Lockdowns, loss of livelihoods and impoverishment are forcing many to become increasingly dependent on emergency humanitarian assistance for their health, shelter, water, sanitation, hygiene, food and nutrition, protection, and donations." Despite these obstacles, UNHCR's distribution activities were uninterrupted, Khalifa said.

A core element of the funding program is the MWL's agreement with UNHCR to support the "Live, Learn & Participate" project to benefit refugees worldwide. The LLP program focuses on enhancing access to solutions for children and young people on the Central Mediterranean Route, mainly to protect and support young people in Cairo, Egypt; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Khartoum and Kassala in Sudan; and Tripoli, Libya.

In UNHCR's mid-2021 report, Dr. Al-Issa stated, "Last year in August, we provided support for a project that aimed to provide a suitable environment for children and youth through educational activities in Sudan, Ethiopia, among others. Our other joint programs served thousands of students around the world. By the grace of Allah, the aid will reach about 3,700

beneficiaries during the current year. Through this blessed partnership, we are looking for more achievements, Allah willing."

Khaled Khalifa said UNHCR humanitarian efforts and partnerships aimed at protecting and assisting the most vulnerable globally displaced persons to "make a real difference in



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the lives of refugees and host communities. "As organizers look to expand operations in the new year, 2021 had served in part as a foundational period as UNHCR and MWL developed the infrastructure to establish a system to distribute funds. Khalifa stressed that UNHCR institutionalized the Refugee Zakat Fund based on recommendations of several fatwas and follows a 100 percent Zakat distribution policy. Zakat funds are received in an interest-free bank and strictly follow Zakat-compliant guidelines. "The distribution model differs from

one country to another, yet the goal is unified, reaching the most in need to help them keep afloat," Khalifa said. "All Zakat distributions are handled through activities that UNHCR directly implements."

By December 2021, donors provided several donations in Zakat funds earmarked for about 490,000 refugees and internally displaced persons, following the program's 100% Zakat

distribution policy. In addition, significant donations in Sadaqah funds will help more than 96,000 people.

Dr. Al-Issa said in the UNHCR report: "This is, of course, in fulfillment of the MWL's Islamic and humanitarian duty, first by aiding those in need wherever they are, as an embodiment of the great religious, moral principle in the words of our Noble Messenger Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, a reward is given in connection with every living creature. Second, it is a fulfillment of the message of the Muslim World League of introducing the whole world to the correct values of Islam in its human and civilized dimension, including love and mercy for every human being, no matter who this human being is."

Providing donations to refugees also proved to be somewhat of a learning experience. UNHCR found that since 2017, goods distributions to refugees when cash was not available were ineffective in easing financial pressure on families. Cash donations were found to be much more impactful. "In general, providing refugees with cash enables them to prioritize and fulfill their needs in a dignified manner," Khalifa said. "This contributes to the local economy. Vulnerable eligible families are supported with cash assistance to cover basic needs such as rent,

food, and healthcare." To identify and prioritize vulnerable families for Zakat, UNHCR uses an assessment framework based on socio-economic criteria, including living conditions, access to services, and food security.

While UNHCR and MWL have made great strides in identifying vulnerable families to receive cash assistance, organizations still are faced with a funding gap between government and private donors. "We have a role to play," Khalifa said. "The private sector, development agencies and financial institutions, all levels of government, civil society and NGOs, and, of course, the refugees themselves. Exploring innovative financial solutions and engaging new audiences and actors is also key to tackling growing humanitarian needs."



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— Khaled Khalifa



Dr. Al-Issa delivers opening remarks at the WHO's Global Solidarity Conference in Geneva.

An Enduring Alliance in Uncertain Times: MWL and WHO

The Muslim World League continues to deepen its alliance with the World Health Organization (WHO) during this critical time as the world struggles to emerge from the global COVID-19 pandemic. As the world's largest umbrella organization for Muslims worldwide, the MWL plays a critical role in communicating the importance of international public health and advisories throughout the Muslim world in addition to providing direct medical and food aid in coordination with governments and health organizations.

In September of last year, in one of the strongest demonstrations of this enduring partnership, Secretary General Dr. Al-Issa traveled to Geneva to deliver opening remarks at the WHO's Global Solidarity Conference and detailed the numerous efforts underway by the MWL in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MWL launched an "Imams for Vaccine" initiative and has encouraged the faithful worldwide to get vaccinated and follow public health guidelines to attempt to mitigate the pandemic's effects on local communities. Dr. Al-Issa also detailed the philosophy be-



Dr. Al-Issa and WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom express global solidarity and partnership in Switzerland amid COVID-19.

hind the MWL's pandemic relief, outlining how its programming and relief are guided by well-established Islamic values that emphasize charitable giving, generosity and reciprocity as the world confronts historic challenges.

Countries around the world have reacted differently to this pandemic. We have seen polarization in some, unity in others, but the common factor in successfully combating the pandemic is global cooperation and the mobilization of hearts and minds to undertake a difficult endeavor together, even at times sacrificing personal comfort and habits for the benefit of our networks of loved ones. At the WHO conference, Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus spoke of the unique role religious institutions and local faith leaders can play in dispelling misinformation by using

their position of trust to aid public health communication and vaccine initiatives.

Dr. Al-Issa emphasized a few central points, explaining, "We have helped some rich European countries when they needed help at the time of the pandemic, after their health system was on the verge of collapse. This is our humanitarian duty with everyone, which made this pandemic bear many important lessons for us that we still benefit from every day. The most important is realizing that the world should unite and act as one family, no matter how many ideas and interests are trying to divide us."

During the Global Solidarity Conference, the MWL and WHO agreed that addressing inequities across the world will remain a challenge,



but that together we must prioritize efforts that focus on the provision of vaccines and medical equipment to the developing world. We are one in the opinion that it is a moral responsibility to solve the pandemic for everyone, not only in countries with economic power and domestic pharmaceutical industries.

Director-General Tedros Adhanom emphasized that “several regions and countries are witnessing a sharp rise in cases of infection and death due to COVID-19, and the reason is the high rate of social contact and movement, the absence of coordinated health and social measures, the emergence of rapidly transmitting mutations and inequality in the availability of vaccines.” Throughout the panel discussions, the focus of the religious and health leaders was on finding solutions to the absence of coordinated social measures, and Dr. Al-Issa proposed a universal health pass-

port to increase the efficacy of government initiatives to control the spread of the virus and incentivize people to become vaccinated.

The strong cooperation between the WHO and the Muslim World League provides critical COVID-19 relief as populations around the world struggle to cope with variants, and represents a link between the realms of faith, science, and multilateral diplomacy to push us all forward into a brighter chapter this year.

While the MWL partners with many UN entities and international institutions, it has focused on devoting resources during this health crisis towards its partnerships with health organizations throughout the world, and coordination with the WHO’s pandemic initiatives will remain central among its goals for 2022.



Dr. Al-Issa and Tony Blair sign a new partnership to bring together their common vision to serve the future generation of youth.

Youth Empowerment at Forefront: MWL’s Partnership with the Tony Blair Institute

Last July, the Muslim World League announced a partnership with the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) that provides a way for the two institutions to act on their shared vision for building a better future for today’s youth. The mission of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change is to support political leaders and governments to build open, inclusive and prosperous societies in a globalized world.

The focus of this partnership is empowering youth all over the world through education and life skills. While the pandemic was tough on everyone, it was extremely tough for the youth. Many of the 1.8 billion young people in the world face difficult challenges such as poverty, violence, exclusion and negative perceptions. Along with these social challenges, the pandemic has prevented them from receiving a high quality education and skills

Dr. Al-Issa and WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom discuss solutions to tackle the global COVID-19 pandemic.



Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair is working with the Muslim World League on the Generation Global Program to serve 100,000 young people.

they will need to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. The MWL partnership with the Tony Blair Institute will attempt to change that.

The MWL and the TBI will work together on the Generation Global initiative over the next three years to deliver a global education program to equip more than 100,000 young people aged 13 to 17 in more than 18 countries with critical thinking and dialogue skills. They will work with a network of schools and educational partners all over the world to train about 2,400 teachers in active listening and global communication skills, which they will employ in the classroom and teach to the students as well.

Along with teaching those skills, this program will aim to help build better understanding and trust between the youth and their com-

munities. Understanding of religious and cultural diversity is a key part of the program as well, in an effort to build better dialogue between individuals who come from different backgrounds, help young people develop empathy and understanding for those who are different, and promote skills that will serve as a tool for their growth.

This program and partnership are especially important during the pandemic. As most schools and educational programs have shifted to virtual learning when possible, young people will have fewer opportunities to participate in the type of dialogue and learn the types of communication skills that they would experience in person. Learning dialogue skills is vital to building bridges of understanding and exchange, combating misinformation and building empathy among young people.

The MWL is proud to support the Generation Global programme. Our participation will help empower the next generation of young people to embrace diversity and become #globalcitizens through dialogue.

Dr. Al-Issa, Secretary General of the Muslim World League, said the move will help create a “better” world. “As leaders, we must provide the next generation with the tools they need to be good citizens of their societies and valued participants in the global conversations that will define our future...Young people need to learn how to listen and express themselves, to learn and to educate, and to operate with empathy and humanity to shape a better world.”

The announcement was a part of World Youth Skills Day, which took place on July 15th.

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair said, “The driving purpose of the Generation Global programme is to use tech connectivity to reach as many students as we can and give them the ability and capacity to think in an

open-minded way towards those that have different backgrounds and beliefs.

Generation Global has a proven track record in facilitating greater understanding of how the world is changing, the importance of respecting and understanding others to build bridges across the boundaries of faith, race and culture. Young people can help communities become fairer and more inclusive through the mainstreaming of global citizenship education. And educating the next generation in this way will also help to plant the seeds of peace.”

Education is the key for the youth in developing dialogue and communication skills, and there is great hope that this program can make that a reality for years to come.



Dr. Al-Issa met the Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, Jagan Chapagain.

MWL and the Red Cross Bring Relief, Optimism and Light to Families in Challenging Times

The MWL has been dedicated to providing relief to those in need, no matter their religion. Since its origin, the MWL has been dedicated to providing relief to those in need no matter their religion and has continued to exercise global leadership in public health and humanitarian assistance in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With more people turning to faith to help them cope with coronavirus and record numbers now seeking religious guidance online through new social media platforms, Islamic-based organizations have been presented with a stronger platform to dispel

misunderstandings about the overall safety of emerging vaccines.

Earlier this year, MWL felt a need to issue a statement to clarify the nature of the vaccine and, as a result, the appropriateness of Muslims receiving the vaccine during Ramadan. "The COVID-19 vaccine does not invalidate the fast of a fasting person because it is not considered food and drink," the statement said. "The vaccine is administered intramuscularly, so it does not invalidate the fast." This guidance was an important piece of public health education for Muslims who were uncertain about exactly what was required

of them and what was allowed during the Ramadan fast.

While the pandemic has weighed heavily on nations throughout the world, the MWL, alongside partner organizations Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, continues to offer support and care during these challenging times, bringing relief, optimism and light when individuals and families need it most. Last September, Dr. Al-Issa met the Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, Jagan Chapagain, who praised Dr. Al-Issa and MWL's efforts in promoting common values and supporting the League's efforts to help those affected by the pandemic.

With continued efforts to help combat COVID-19 in Somalia, the Muslim World League also provided financial aid to the government. MWL worked alongside the Ministry

of Health to equip frontline workers tackling the virus with necessary medical supplies and to educate Somalis on practices needed to stem the spread of the disease, which was spreading rapidly in the Horn of Africa.



With more people turning to faith to help them cope with coronavirus and record numbers now seeking religious guidance online through new social media platforms, Islamic-based organizations have been presented with a stronger platform to dispel misunderstandings about the overall safety of emerging vaccines. "

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Muslim World League has provided food relief to 21 countries



The Muslim World League delivered humanitarian aid to 24 countries in need.



Help for Children Across the MENA Region

The MWL Partnership with UNICEF

Work toward the identical goals of the Muslim World League and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) bore fruit through a successful partnership that helped thousands of children in the Middle East and Africa region.

UNICEF is a United Nations agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid worldwide with a focus in children. It remains one of the most widespread and recognizable social welfare organizations globally. Together with its partners, it works in over 190 countries. MWL goals are in line with UNICEF goals. Along with bringing help to anyone in need, assisting children has always been at the center of the organization's interests and its core mission.

In the natural course of events, the paths of both organizations have led toward a common goal and joined their forces to help children internationally even more effectively. The organizations partnership goes back many years ago when the Muslim World League joined to meet the needs of children in the Middle East and North Africa. Over the last three years alone, the organization led by Dr. Al-Issa provided a substantial donation to support the needs of vulnerable children throughout the region.

In speaking about the joint initiatives, Abdulrahman Bin Mohammed Al Mattar, Muslim World League's Secretary General for Executive Affairs, said, "Muslim World League through its Under Secretariat for Executive Affairs cherishes the relationship with the

United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF, which has yielded various programs for children in many developing nations around the world."

The MWL's partnership with UNICEF has been extended through its Undersecretariat for Executive Affairs, formerly known as The International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), which was founded by the Muslim World League in 1978.

The IIRO's seven main programs are social welfare, engineering, social development, emergency relief, health care, education, and Qur'an teaching. Bringing help to children, the most vulnerable ones, is its highest priority. It has worked in several shared projects with the most prominent social welfare organizations globally, including the World Health Organization, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Program (WFP), and UNICEF. In Africa, the group is active in the following countries: Uganda, Chad, Tanzania, Comoros, South Africa, Lesotho, South Sudan, Mozambique, Niger, Benin, Djibouti, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Cameroon, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Togo, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Egypt, Mauritania, and Nigeria.

UNICEF has also been running programs in these countries. They aim to reach children with routine immunizations and malnutrition treatment, including therapeutic food and milk. The organization carries-out various programs in local schools, including the construc-

tion of water and sanitation facilities, schools and classrooms rehabilitation, and psychosocial support and risk education training for children and youth.

To strengthen their efforts to provide care to children and orphans, UNICEF signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), now the MWL's Undersecretariat for Executive Affairs, over twelve years ago. The agreement has served to support children's rights, health, equality, and protection across all countries.

"Building partnerships with leading organizations like the International Islamic Relief Organization is the result of our trust in their continuous and effective efforts to protect and secure a better future for children," said Dr. Ayman Abu Laban, then the UNICEF representative for Gulf and other Arab countries.

Moreover, some of the most recent MWL and UNICEF partnership programs have aimed to reach more than 90,000 refugee children and their families living in South Darfour, Sudan, which has suffered both armed conflicts and natural disasters. Both organizations are dedicated to providing these children and

their families with access to quality essential social services, health and nutrition services, and access to education in camps and host communities.

Earlier last year, Henrietta H. Fore, UNICEF Executive Director, spoke about the organization's strategic partnership with the Muslim World League. She emphasized MWL's vital



The MWL's partnership with UNICEF has been extended through another organization, The International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), also known as the International Organization for Relief, Welfare and Development. This charity, based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was founded by the Muslim World League in 1978."

role in facing the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic to build a better world for children.

"UNICEF guides hope to fight the pandemic, including delivering the vaccines to the most vulnerable communities around the world. But we cannot do it alone. We count on our partners worldwide, indulging the Muslim World League to support all of our work

to build a better world for children. So thank you for all that you have done to support UNICEF's mission," she said.

Having built upon the same objectives and missions, the partnership between UNICEF and the MWL has helped thousands of children in the MENA region. Their joint initiatives to bring relief to the most vulnerable are exceptionally vital and needed during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.





The MWL, UNESCO, Columbia University, and the Shaphardi Foundation organized a forum on Islamic values and shared religious philosophies. The forum also highlighted historical contributions from Muslims .

The MWL Partners with UNESCO, ECOSOC and UNRWA

“We are all in this together and we should be extending the bridges of support to all in need.”

-Dr. Muhammad Al-Issa, Secretary General of the MWL

Every partnership is unique and those that MWL partners with around the middle east and the globe are what allows the Muslim World League to fully realize its goals of helping all peoples, regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion. As we look back on 2021 and ahead to 2022, it is important to highlight some of the most beneficial connections that the MWL has had.

One of the most special groups is UNESCO, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The MWL has a long and beneficial history working with the UN sub-

group and in the last few years this cooperation has continued to drive the MWL mission forward. Last year, the MWL and UNESCO teamed up with Columbia University and the Sephardi Foundation in order to organize an educational religious forum. The forum allowed people to discuss Islamic values as well as shared religious philosophies and highlight historic Islamic contributions such as the Charter of Makkah.

Prior to this, the MWL joined with the University of Peace with the prospect of researching the UNESCO International Decade for the Rap-

prochement of Cultures to further investigate the outcomes from the MWL Conference for Protecting Youth from Extremist ideologies. Mr. Levrak, the special advisor to HE Dr. Mohammad Al-Issa, and University of Peace Puyana Fernandez headed up the research efforts.

This is just one of the main organs of the broader United Nations that the Muslim World League works with year in and year out. The MWL also partners with ECOSOC, The United Nations Economic and Social Council. ECOSOC lies at the center of the United Nations overall effort to enhance the dimensions of sustainable development. “It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals.” The MWL maintains a consultative status with ECOSOC, which allows us to give advice and foster change at the highest level.

It is no secret that the Middle East is home to some of the world’s most complex issues. One issue that has stood out over the years has been the Israeli-Palestine conflict. The MWL has been working alongside the United Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in hopes to enhance primary and vocational education, primary health care, relief and social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, microfinance, and emergency



Through helping the UNRWA financially, the MWL helps to enhance education, social services, and much more for those displaced by conflict.

response, including in situations of armed conflict in and around Palestine. Over the years, the MWL has provided substantial financial support to allow the UNRWA to carry out their mission.

In a region marred by conflict, COVID-19, and environmental crises, it is partnerships like this that keep the world progressing. Without the help that the MWL and these groups give to each other, we as a globe would not have such a bright and cooperative future to look forward to.



ECOSOC
United Nations Economic and Social Council

The MWL’s work alongside ECOSOC has helped both groups in their goals to promote and support sustainable development around the world.

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