

ANNOUNCEMENT



Organized by



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Sponsors

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INTRODUCTION

The proposal for the hosting of the Caribbean Muslim Forum (CMF) 2010 is a follow up to CMF 2005 and 2006 both of which were held in Trinidad & Tobago. The Resolutions of both are included at the end of this document.

The Caribbean region encompasses over 30 nations incorporating Muslim communities at various stages of development. Some communities are fledgling communities with very small numbers of Muslims while others are well established with economic and political influence in their societies. There is, therefore, a dire need to raise the standard of the lesser developed communities and bridge the disparities among the various communities.

Additionally, given the geographic location of Caribbean states they are prone to major hurricanes, torrential rains, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides and tsunamis. Owing to the small size of these states, these natural disasters can affect the entire national community and economy. The most recent disaster in Haiti is just one example.

Despite the very small size of the Muslim community in Haiti, Muslims throughout the Caribbean Region, the US, Canada, UK and Middle East mobilized to assist not only the Muslims of Haiti but the nation at large.

The Forum brings together policymakers, scholars, academics, Imams and leaders of Muslim communities and institutions from within and outside the region to discuss issues related to Muslim history, development, welfare, education, institutions, organizations and co-operation.

The Caribbean Muslim Forum therefore is a platform for lively exchange of information and ideas, discussion and sharing of experiences. On the one hand, the Forum provides an opportunity to take stock of the achievements of the Muslim communities in the region and on the other hand to seriously address critical issues.

As an important networking event, the Forum is a Premier Muslim Event in the Caribbean focused and aimed at furthering the development of Muslim communities, improving their social and economic conditions, preserving their cultural and religious identities and urging their meaningful contributions to the development of their countries.

Thirty-eight people, representing twenty-one organizations from ten (10) countries participated in CMF 2005. CMF 2006 was attended by representatives from some eighteen (18) Caribbean, Central and South American countries including Barbados, Jamaica, Haiti, Surinam, Argentina, Mexico, Guatemala, Venezuela, Guyana, Curacao, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, St. Vincent, Grenada, Antigua & Barbuda and Bermuda. Representatives of several of T&T's major Muslim organizations, Zakah Managers, business persons and other interested persons were also in attendance.

Several mitigating factors delayed the third CMF. However, some of our Caribbean brothers have been meeting and participating in the annual conferences organized by OIPALC.

A NEW APPROACH IN THE REGION

During the last three or four decades, Caribbean Islamic conferences have been organized or sponsored by international Islamic bodies based in the Muslim world. The sponsors of these conferences provided both airfare and accommodation to the participants and speakers. Normally, only one organization would sponsor an event.

Our proposal is based on an entrepreneurial spirit which seeks to fulfil the aspirations of sponsors, donors and participants with all interest groups contributing financially to the project and adding to its feasibility.

If this approach is successful, then international bodies, rather than paying the full cost of a conference, could now co-sponsor an event and participate in it at a fraction of the cost of hosting one on its own.

CMF 2005 was funded via part sponsorship by the Muslim Credit Union, a grant from the Ministry of Community and Gender Affairs (T&T), contributions from Muslim organizations and Muslim-owned companies, fees, financial inputs from participants and non-financial inputs from some Muslim families in the environs of the venue of the Forum.

CMF 2006 was sponsored by The Organización Islámica Para América Latina (OIPAL), headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Trinidad-based Takaaful T&T Friendly Society, Islamic Broadcasting Network and Muslim Credit Union Co-operative Society Ltd. (MCU). The Caribbean Islamic Council (CIC) and business entities and individuals in T&T also contributed. *Alhamdulillah*, sufficient funds were collected to cover all expenses.

ORGANIZER

The CMF is organized by Central Zakah, a registered non-profit organization in Trinidad and Tobago.

At CMF 2005, an executive committee was appointed to follow up on the resolutions passed. The committee comprises Imtiaz Ali, Fazeel Ferouz (Guyana) and Suleiman Bulbulia (Barbados) with Imtiaz as the chairman. This Committee was re-instated in 2006. However, over the past four years, Hatim Yusuf of St. Croix, Shaykh Musa Tijani of Jamaica and Owolabi Elabanjo of Antigua & Barbuda were co-opted.

In Antigua and Barbuda, the local Islamic body, Antigua and Barbuda International Islamic Society, will host the Forum and make the local arrangements.

SPONSORS

Sponsors are welcome from within and outside of the Region. The main roles of the sponsors would be funding and participation. They may also provide resource persons and materials.

THEME

The theme of the Forum is “Developing Communities in Developing Nations.”

We have decided to use the same theme as before because it is a broad theme which incorporates many issues which could not have been fully explored in two conferences. Additionally, some of the papers presented at the first Forum were not discussed and the resolutions passed at both Forums need further discussion, clarification and follow-up. We would also like to receive some more papers on some of the topics listed thereby allowing for varying perspectives and greater dialogue.

CMF 2006 focused on one of the CMF 2005 resolutions namely Zakah Management with the main lecturer being Professor Dr. Monzer Kahf.

OBJECTIVES

The Forum will serve as a platform to:

1. Exchange ideas and share experiences in addressing matters of national and regional interest.
2. Solicit, collate and publish (a) information about Muslim Communities in the Region and (b) papers on Islamic/Muslim perspectives on national, regional and international issues.
3. Deepen the participant’s knowledge and understanding of the current situation of Muslims and Islam in the region.
4. Initiate and develop co-operation among Muslims in the Caribbean region.
5. Foster linkages between Muslim communities in the Caribbean.
6. Nurture a sense of belonging and affinity among Caribbean Muslims.
7. Showcase Caribbean Muslim communities to Caribbean and extra-Caribbean Muslim communities and institutions.
8. Intensify and broaden the efforts of Muslim communities and institutions at national development

TOPICS

The Forum has identified a wide range of topics for research and discussion. Obviously all these topics cannot be discussed at one conference. We therefore solicit papers for archiving on our web site so that they can be easily accessible and available for future conferences.

The following Papers already received for CMF 2005 are available on our web site:

1. Muslims in the Caribbean- Towards Increased Co-operation and Integration
2. An Overview of Muslim Educational Institutions in Trinidad
3. Muslim Communities and Economic Development
4. Overview of Takaaful T&T Friendly Society
5. Caribbean Single Market & Economy
6. Islamic Education Using Internet Technology
7. Communication Options
8. Islamic Minorities in the Western World
9. Role Muslim Communities and Islamic Institutions in Highlighting the Image of Islam

The following is a list of the possible topics for research and/or presentation at this or future Forums:

1. Muslims in Caribbean history- discovery, slavery and indentureship
2. Challenges of diversity- Muslims in the Caribbean
3. Muslim communities and the Muslim Ummah
4. Muslim communities and globalization
5. Communities within democratic societies- concept and parameters
6. Role and function of Muslim communities in non-Islamic states
7. Dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims in the Caribbean
8. Da'wah to Muslims and non-Muslims- trends in the Caribbean
9. Islamic conversion patterns in the Caribbean and related issues
10. Muslim demographics in the Caribbean- a review of the statistics
11. Economic development of Muslim communities- trends in the Caribbean
12. Muslim welfare institutions in the Caribbean- theory and practice
13. Islamic savings and investment institutions in the Caribbean
14. Financing Muslim community development- practices and prospects in the Caribbean
15. Pathways for the economic development of Muslims in the Caribbean region
16. Waqf – A sustainable development institution for Muslim Communities
17. Zakah management and education among Muslims in the Caribbean
18. Caribbean Single Market and Economy- Impact on Muslim institutions and communities
19. Communications- options for Caribbean Muslims
20. The Internet- opportunities for Muslim communities in the Caribbean
21. Overview of Muslim educational institutions in the Caribbean

22. Religious Instruction for Muslims in public secondary schools- prospects, challenges and opportunities
23. Islamic tertiary education in the Caribbean- prospects, challenges and opportunities
24. The teaching of the Arabic language- an overview of methods and achievements among Muslim communities in the Caribbean region
25. Family-life education among Muslims in the Caribbean
26. How to establish an Islamic section in your national library
27. Political activism among Muslim communities in the Caribbean- Past, Present and Future
28. Major health issues facing Caribbean Muslims with particular reference to HIV Aids
29. Impact of wider societal issues on Muslims in the Caribbean with particular reference to alcoholism, drugs, gambling, promiscuity and music
30. Muslim communities in the Caribbean- organization and structure
31. How to manage internal diversity within national Muslim communities
32. How to strengthen the links among the various Muslim groups/communities of the Region.
33. Muslim Youth Organisations in the Caribbean- Past, Present and Future
34. Muslim Women Organisations in the Caribbean- Past, Present and Future
35. From Orhnis to Hijabs- Cultural and Religious Acceptance
36. The impact of the Niqab in public space and its implications for Muslims in the Caribbean
37. Community organizations and Best Practices
38. Community organizations- Reports
39. Islam and terrorism
40. Terrorism- preventative measures and responses
41. Membership in the Organisation of the Islamic Conference- the experiences of Guyana and Suriname
42. Reducing the impact of natural disasters in the Caribbean region
43. Networking strategies among Muslim communities within and outside the Caribbean region when disaster strikes

DATES & DURATION

Sunday 1st and Monday 2nd August, 2010.

Foreign participants, staying at the venue, are expected to arrive on Saturday 31st July and depart by noon on Tuesday 3rd August.

VENUE

Antigua and Barbuda is located in the middle of the Leeward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean, roughly 17 degrees north of the equator. This sunny twin-island nation boasts

natural beauty, mild weather, economic and political stability and a well-educated workforce which offers excellent business opportunities and is at the forefront in the overall ease of doing business.

In addition, Antigua and Barbuda is centrally located - popularly referred to as the "heart of the Caribbean" - and can be considered a perfect location for meetings and conferences. Consequently, the Caribbean Muslim Forum (CMF) will be the first Islamic conference to take place in this Caribbean paradise.

This year's venue is the renowned Jolly Beach Resort and Spa. It is located on the South West coast of Antigua on a mile of white sand beach and is just 30 minutes drive from the V.C Bird International Airport. This resort not only has 464 ocean facing rooms with breathtaking views, but excellent conference faculties including meeting rooms with audio visual equipment, Wi-Fi access and break-out rooms.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Muslim policymakers, scholars, academics and educators, Imams and leaders of Muslim communities and executive members of Islamic institutions from within and outside the Caribbean region.

Prospective participants are encouraged to pre-register immediately so that the organizers may be able to gauge the level of interest in this Forum.

The organizers reserve the right to reject registrants without providing any reasons.

To pre-register please complete the Pre-Registration form attached.
A confirmation letter and invoice will be sent to you upon receipt of your registration.

If you require assistance, please send a letter from your organization requesting such.

LECTURERS & PANELISTS

These will be drawn from within the Caribbean and, hopefully, from outside the region.

The participants will serve as resource persons with respect to their particular communities.

PAPERS

These will comprise selected reading material relevant to the topics and those submitted by the speakers.

A 'Call for Papers' will also be issued.

A panel to review abstracts and papers to be presented will be established.

The organizers may not be able to offer free transportation to speakers.

ACTIVITIES

The Forum will include the following activities:

1. Formal Opening
2. Lectures
3. Panel presentations & discussions
4. Workshops
5. Dinner/Luncheon (optional)
6. Visit to the mosque

FUNDING & FEES

The Forum is structured on the premise that all participants will be required to pay to attend and that they will all be staying at the hotel. If the full cost of the Forum is passed on to the participants, then based on our estimates, each participant would be required to pay approximately \$700 USD. This does not include the costs of airfare and accommodation to presenters.

The proposed fee, however, is \$650 USD (for single occupancy) and \$550 USD (per person for double occupancy) for 3 nights, meals and refreshments during the Forum (2 days), transportation to and from the airport, a tour to the mosque and Forum documentation.

If we receive sufficient funds from sponsors, we will consider first to provide free accommodation and meals to our approved participants and then airfare with first preference going to needy communities.

Additionally, attempts will be made to source donors to facilitate the participation of representatives of needy communities. Such communities would have to submit written requests for financial assistance and within specific timeframes.

PAYMENTS

All payments re sponsorship and donations should be made payable to Central Zakah.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information you may contact Imtiaz Ali as follows:

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#20 Springvale Road
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E-mail: ibali@tstt.net.tt

For updates on CMF 2010 and information about CMF 2005 & 6 you may check the relevant section of our website: www.centralzakah.org The papers are located in the “Members Only” section. The username is “centralzakah” and the password is “imtiazali”.

You can also check out our new sections *Caribbean Muslim Communities’ Profile* and *Caribbean Muslim Institutions Profile* on the site.

APPENDIX 1

CMF 2005 RESOLUTIONS

The following Resolutions were discussed and passed:

1. That each Community develops a framework to manage internal diversity.
2. That the CMF moves to form an interim executive body composed of three (3) members from the participants, to run the affairs of the CMF Secretariat and to ensure implementation of its Resolutions until the next forum in March 2006. In this regard, Imtiaz Ali (Chairman) – T&T, Suleiman Bulbulia – Barbados and Fazeel Ferouz – Guyana were unanimously elected as interim executive members.
3. That the Caribbean Muslim Forum (CMF) moves to strengthen the links among the various groups/communities of the Region.
4. That the CMF becomes a member of the Islamic Organization of Latin America (OIPAL) and that OIPAL become part of the CMF so as to ensure effective co-ordination of Caribbean and Latin American issues concerning Muslims.
5. That there be established a Quarterly Magazine to share information and experiences within the region.
6. That an organized pool of volunteer teachers be developed to deliver Islamic education to students in State-run secondary schools.

7. That a syllabus be developed to deliver a programme of Islamic education at different levels in the education system.
8. That each Caribbean territory makes efforts to establish an Islamic section in their respective National libraries.
9. That regular training courses, be developed to enhance the Islamic knowledge and leadership skills of Caribbean Muslim leaders and teachers.
10. That a Steering Committee be set up to explore the possibility of an Islamic University of the Caribbean.
11. That to ensure effective co-ordination between OIPAL and the Caribbean countries, OIPAL may consider funding the provision of a modern communication project to link up with the Caribbean countries.
12. That the possibility of tele-conferencing or some similar method of communication be explored.
13. That properly organized family-life education programmes be made available to Muslims in the Caribbean.
14. That the possibility of Islamic radio broadcasts via the Internet be explored.
15. That Muslim organizations be encouraged to set aside part of their income for investments.
16. That a forum is organized for the discussions and implementation of Zakah programmes.
17. That intra -trade be promoted within the *Ummah* worldwide and that a committee of experts be set up for this purpose.
18. That a committee be formed to support the economic development of Muslims in the region.
19. That the CMF should explore ways for Trinidad and Tobago to become a member state of the OIC.

APPENDIX 2

CMF 2006 RESOLUTIONS

The following Resolutions were discussed and passed:

1. The Resolutions of CMF 2005 were discussed and renewed.

2. The interim executive body to run the affairs of the CMF Secretariat and to ensure implementation of its Resolutions until the next forum in 2007 was re-instated.
Imtiaz Ali (Chairman) – T&T, Suleiman Bulbulia – Barbados and Fazeel Ferouz – Guyana
3. All delegates resolved to assist in the building of the first masjid in Antigua.
4. Antigua & Barbuda, St. Croix and Grenada were approved for entry into OIPAL
5. An agreement was signed which called for the inclusion of the Caribbean in the name of OIPAL

PRE-REGISTRATION & REGISTRATION OF INTEREST FORM

Name (Mr./Ms)	
Postal Address	
Country	
Telephone	
Fax	
Email	
Institution Representing	
Postal Address	
Country	
Telephone	
Fax	
Email	
Web site	
Your position	
Suggestions for CMF 2010	