



MPAC Convention

The Rising Voice of Moderate Muslims
"And thus have We willed you to be a community of moderation," (Quran 2:143)

December 29, 2001
Sequoia Conference Center

Program

- 11:00 am **Quranic Recitation** Saleh Kholoki Victorian Room
Quranic Translation Shereen Othman
- Welcome** Ramsey Hakim
 Maher Hathout
- 11:15 am **American Muslims: Two Issues of Concern** Victorian Room
Islamic Perspective on American Patriotism Gasser Hathout
Suffering of Women Under Extremism Asifa Quraishi
Moderator: Edina Lekovic
- 11:55 am Orange County Sheriff Mike Carona
- 12:05 pm **Reform our Human Understanding of Islam** Hampton Room
Fathi Osman, Islamic Scholar
Moderator: Omar Ricci
- 1:00 pm **Duhr prayer** Waterford Room
Lunch Remington Room
- 1:45 pm Yahia Abdul-Rahman, Shura Council
- 1:50 pm **Anti-Terrorism Legislation and Concern Over Civil Liberties** Hampton Room
Steve Rohde, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Omar Ahmad, Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Reverend Jim Lawson, Holeman Methodist Church
Ron Wakabayashi, Department of Justice
Moderator: Mahdi Bray
- 2:45 pm Break
- 2:55 pm **America's Interests and Image in the Muslim World** Victorian Room
Agha Saeed, American Muslim Alliance
Aslam Abdullah, Minaret Magazine
Ebrahim Yazdi, Expert on Iranian & Middle Eastern Affairs
Moderator: Hassan Ibrahim
- 3:55 pm Break
Asr Prayer Waterford Room

Biographies of Participants MPAC Convention, 2001

Dr. Aslam Abdullah: Dr. Aslam Abdullah is the editor of two prominent Muslim American newspapers. He edits *The Minaret*, a monthly magazine published from Los Angeles and the *Muslim Observer*, a weekly newspaper published from Detroit, MI. Dr. Aslam Abdullah is well known for his community work, published books and involvement in relief activities. He is a speaker, journalist, writer and author of several books. He has published 11 books, and more than 400 articles on issues pertaining to Muslims and Islam. He is a vice chairman of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, president of the American Muslim Federation of Muslims from India, a board member of the North American Association of Professionals and Scholars. He was vice president of the American Islamic College in Chicago, prior to that, he edited the *Arabia* magazine published from London. In addition, he has worked for the International Youth Center in New Delhi. Dr. Abdullah is affiliated with several youth related activities in the country. He is part of the Muslim Student Network, a Washington-based student group devoted to providing policy related training to Muslim students. He is also involved in youth camps as a youth trainer. Dr. Aslam Abdullah, a naturalized U.S. citizen, was born in India.

Kamal Abu-Shamsieh: Mr. Kamal Abu-Shamsieh was born in Ramallah, Palestine, and was educated at Birzeit University in the West Bank, Palestine, where he received a BA in Linguistics and a Diploma in Translation. He also received a Certificate in Video Production at Specs Howard Broadcast Arts, in Southfield, MI. Before joining the Muslim Public Affairs Council as the Community Relations Director, Mr. Abu-Shamsieh worked on several documentary projects for the Arab American community in Dearborn, MI, and several international broadcast projects about Palestine and Palestinian issues.

Omar Ahmad: Mr. Omar Ahmad is the Chairman of the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) based in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Nayyer Ali: Dr. Nayyer Ali has been interested in history since childhood. He scored a perfect 800 on the European History SAT as a high school student, then obtained a degree in history from Stanford University, emphasizing Middle East and modern American history. After graduating with a medical degree from Washington University St. Louis, he pursued specialty training in internal medicine and critical care. He has been an active member of the Muslim community. In addition to writing a weekly column for *Pakistan Link* newspaper, and monthly for *The Minaret* magazine, he serves on the board of MPAC and also on the board of Council of Pakistan American Affairs. He earned an MBA from Keller Graduate School last year, and is a partner in his critical care group practice, serves on the board of Microgen Systems Inc, a biotech startup company, and lives in Huntington Beach with his wife and two children.

Salam Al-Marayati: Mr. Al-Marayati is the director and one of the founders of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), a public service agency aimed at disseminating accurate information about Islam to the American public. He has been director of MPAC for the past 12 years. At his present position, Mr. Al-Marayati has had the opportunity to speak to congregations at community-sponsored events, temples, synagogues, churches, high schools, and college campuses. Mr. Al-Marayati serves as a commissioner on the Human Relations Commission in Los Angeles, formed to improve access to city government, reduce discrimination, and promote respect, tolerance and justice. He has written extensively on Islam, human rights, democracy, Middle East politics, the Balkan Crisis, and the Transcaucus conflict. Mr. Al-Marayati is married to Dr. Laila Al-Marayati, the founder of the Muslim Womens League and a member of the Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom for the Secretary of State. In January 1998, they both organized an Eid celebration at the White House upon the request of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. The commemoration marked the end of the month-long fast, Ramadan, for Americas Muslims.

The Reverend Edward Bacon: Ed Bacon leads a 3,500-member multi-ethnic urban Episcopal parish with a reputation for energetic worship, a broad variety of ministries, a radically inclusive spirit, and a progressive peace and justice agenda. He is a member of the National Advisory Council for Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, Cristosal, and was recently elected an alternate deputy to his church's national legislative body, the General Convention. He serves on the boards of several community organizations, including The Pasadena Aids Service Center, the Coalition for Zero Violence, and the John Muir High School Organizing Project. He is an active participant in the Interfaith campaign for a Nuclear-Free World and the Pacific Council on International Relations. He is a founder of Beyond Inclusion (gay and straight Episcopalians organized to realize justice for gays and lesbians). He is the Chair of the Sponsoring Committee of L.A. METRO, the Industrial Areas Foundation organization in Los Angeles. Since September 11th he has helped develop two groups: "Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace" and "Bridging LA". At the center of his life is his thirty-year marriage to Hope Hendricks-Bacon, their two adult children, and a prayer practice formed by Ignatian Spirituality. In 1999 his alma mater, the Candler School of Theology at Emory University named him their Whiteside Distinguished Preacher. His undergraduate school, Mercer University, conferred on him an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree in May 1999.

Mahdi Bray: Mahdi Bray is a long time civil and human rights activist. He worked several years as a political consultant to Bonner & Associates, the nation's largest grassroots lobbying firm. He is currently the National Political Advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), and the President of the Coordinating Council of Muslim Organizations. Mr. Bray's political involvement also includes working for numerous national and state political campaigns and working with several interfaith organizations. He also serves as a member of the National Coalition to Protect Political Freedom and is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Interfaith Committee for Workers Justice, the Board of Directors of WJAM Youth Radio Organization, and the Advisory Board of the American Muslim Council, the Board of Directors of the National Interfaith Alliance and co-founder of the Independent Voters League. He is the founder of the Boys and Girls Alternative Learning Center in Alexandria, Virginia and National

Islamic Prison Foundation. Additionally, Mr. Bray has been recently appointed to the District of Columbia Mayor's Religious Advisory Panel and is a 2002 candidate for Neighborhood Commissioner in Ward 4 in Washington, DC. Bray is a radio and TV talk show host on the American Muslim International Network.

Lydia Burgos: Ms. Burgos is a senior at California State University, Los Angeles majoring in Criminal Justice with a minor in Sociology. Ms. Burgos is currently a volunteer at the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women. She is currently employed with the Muslim Public Affairs Council as the Administrative Assistant. With the exception of Salam Al-Marayati, Lydia Burgos is the most tenured employee at MPAC.

Sarah Eltantawi: Sarah Eltantawi completed her B.A. in English and Rhetoric with a minor in Creative Writing from the University of California, Berkeley, and her M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University, where she wrote her master's thesis on "The Role of Self-Criticism in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual Production." Ms. Eltantawi is currently the Communications Director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council. Prior to coming to MPAC, Ms. Eltantawi wrote the "Syria" section of the best-selling *Lets Go Travel Guide*, and studied classical Arabic at Birzeit University in the West Bank, Palestine. Ms. Eltantawi also worked at San Quentin Prison in Northern California, where she was a director of a social program for the children of lifetime inmates. She has written and spoken extensively on American Muslim issues and geo-political issues on television and radio. Her creative work, mostly poetry, has also been published in several journals and magazines.

Dr. Gasser Hathout: Dr. Gasser Hathout was born in Egypt, and raised in the United States. He attended college at Harvard University, where he majored in economics, and graduated with honors. During his college years, he was a senior editor of the Harvard International Review. After college, he came to UCLA, where he has been since. He graduated from UCLA Medical School with honors, and did his post-graduate training there as well. Currently, he is an associate professor of neuroradiology at UCLA, practicing primarily at the VA-UCLA medical center. He has been active in multiple capacities with the Islamic Center of Southern California, the New Horizon School system, and MPAC, where he has served as a board member and as research director.

Dr. Maher Hathout: Dr. Hathout is an Internist and Cardiologist by profession, earning his medical degree from the University of Cairo in 1960. He has had his own practice since 1976 in internal medicine and cardiovascular disease in the city of Duarte, California. Among the numerous offices he holds, Dr. Hathout is the Senior Advisor of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). He is also the spokesperson and former chairman of the Islamic Center of Southern California. He has recently become a Charter Member of the Pacific Council on International Policy, the western partner of the Council on Foreign Relations, and joined the Board of Directors of the Interfaith Alliance. Dr. Hathout has been invited to Capitol Hill and the State Department several times to address a variety of topics such as "Islam and U.S. Policy," "Islamic Democracy,"

"Emerging Trends in Islamic Movements," and "the Future of the Middle East." He has traveled to Australia, Egypt, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, and South Africa to lecture on Islam and Muslims. Dr. Hathout has written extensively on Islam, human rights, democracy, Middle East politics, and Bosnia. His articles and interviews have appeared in such prominent newspapers as *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Christian Science Monitor*. He appears frequently on television and radio talk shows, including C-SPAN, KABC, KCBS, KNBC, KCET, KCAL, KNX, KFWB, KPFK, and KFI.

Ramsey Hakim: Ramsey Hakim is currently vice president of AT&T Solutions, the outsourcing and technology consulting arm of AT&T Corp. Prior to his current position, Mr. Hakim held several positions in Sales Management, General Management and Operations with AT&T and British Telecom (BT). Mr. Hakim holds an MBA and a BS in Computer Science from the University of California, Irvine, and recently graduated from the Advanced Management program in Telecommunications from the USC Center for Telecommunications Management at the Marshall School of Business. Over the last 10 years, Mr. Hakim has served twice on the board of the Islamic Center of Southern California, assisted in the establishment of the New Horizon School of West L.A., where he serves on the board. Mr. Hakim is currently the Chairman of MPAC and is a member of the World Affairs Council in Los Angeles, and is on the board of the National Center for Community and Justice. He is married to Firdous (Fiddy), a full-time homemaker today, but an engineer and MBA from UCLA by profession. Ramsey and Fiddy have two children, Adam and Samir, both attending the New Horizon School.

Dr. Hassan Ibrahim: Dr. Hassan Ibrahim is the National Director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) and a member of the Board of Directors of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS). Since 1993, he has served as Chair of the ADAMS Public Relations Committee and from 1996-1998 was the Vice-President of ADAMS. In addition, Dr. Ibrahim is a founding member of the executive committee for D.C. Eid Celebration, which organizes a mega-celebration for over 25,000 members of the Muslim community in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Dr. Ibrahim is also a professor of Business Administration at the University of Maryland College Park.

Nagwa Ibrahim: Ms. Ibrahim graduated from University of California, Los Angeles, with a B.A. in Sociology and Public Policy. Ms. Ibrahim is the National Community Outreach Coordinator for MPAC, and a Middle School English and History Instructor at New Horizon School in Pasadena. Ms. Ibrahim is involved in developing youth arts programs in Southern California. Through her involvement with organizations such as Elev8 and Sands of the Ummah, Ms. Ibrahim develops and implements youth arts programs that promote social and political activism and awareness for Muslim and non-Muslim youth.

Reverend Jim Lawson: Reverend Lawson is the Pastor Emeritus of the Holeman Methodist Church, where he held his post for 25 years. Reverend Lawson was involved in the Southern Movement for Justice between 1958-1974, where he was a colleague of Martin Luther King Jr. Reverend Lawson believes that non violence is the only means to create a better society, and will be teaching a course on non-violence next quarter at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Edina Lekovic: Edina Lekovic is the managing editor of *The Minaret*, a Los Angeles-based national Muslim magazine. Ms. Lekovic is a graduate of UCLA (in American Literature & Culture, 1999), where she was the Editor in Chief of *The Daily Bruin*, the third largest paper in Los Angeles. She led the staff to win a number of national awards, including the Society of Professional Journalists Best of the West in college publications. She is also the recipient of a number of writing awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and the California Intercollegiate Press Association. **While at UCLA, Ms. Lekovic also was the managing editor of *Al-Talib* (The Student), a nationwide Muslim student publication.** Ms. Lekovic is also one of the founders of Elev8, an organization that works to develop youth community leadership rooted in awareness, responsibility and action. Elev8 has addressed over 1,500 high school students throughout Los Angeles County since September 11.

Senator Bob Margett: Senator Bob Margett is a dedicated public servant with a history of working to improve our schools, reform HMOs, and protect neighborhoods from violent crime. He was elected to represent the 29th Senate District in November 2000. Prior to his election to the Senate, he served in the State Assembly, representing the 59th Assembly District from 1995-2000. Prior to being elected to the Legislature, Margett served as both Mayor and Councilman of the City of Arcadia and as Chairman of the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority. Combined, the experiences have given him insight and understanding to the 29th district which is located in North and East Los Angeles County and includes the cities of: Arcadia, Bradbury, Charter Oaks, Claremont, Covina, Diamond Bar, Duarte, Glendora, Industry, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, La Verne, Monrovia, Rowland Heights, San Dimas, Sierra Madre, Vincent, Walnut, West Covina and portions of Pomona, Temple City and Whittier. Margett and his wife, Beverly, have been residents of Arcadia, CA for 35 years. They have seven children and ten grandchildren. Margett attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he majored in Economics and Business Administration. He is a former business owner, engineering contractor and is a partner in industrial properties.

Suhad Obeidi: Suhad Obeidi obtained her B.A. at the California State University, Fullerton in marketing, and her M.B.A. at the California State University, Dominguez Hills. Prior to joining the Muslim Public Affairs Council, Suhad had a decade long career in banking. She was a branch manager and a regional trainer at World Savings Bank. During her career at the bank, she was able to fine tune her skills in leadership, human resource management, and business development. Suhad uses these skills at MPAC as the Director of Operations.

Dr. Fathi Osman: Fathi Osman is a distinguished Islamic scholar who has taught in several universities all over the world. In addition to his contributions to modern Islamic thinking published in Arabic, he was the Editor-in-Chief of the London based international Islamic magazine, *Arabia: The Islamic World Review* from 1981 to 1987. Some of his books in English are: *Jihad: A Legitimate Struggle for Human Rights, In Fraternity: A Message to Muslims in America*, (co-authored) *The Muslim World: Issues and Challenges*, and *Muslim Women in the Family and the Society*. His major work on *The Concepts of the Quran: A Topical Reading of the Divine Message* is in print.

Senator Richard G. Polanco: Richard G. Polanco was elected to the California State Senate in 1994 where he now serves as Senate Majority Leader representing the Twenty Second District. Senator Polanco was first elected to the State Assembly in 1986 where he served for eight years. While in the Assembly he attained statewide recognition for successfully working in a bipartisan manner to better serve all Californians. Senator Polanco began his dedication to public service through his involvement in student government, the Junior Optimist Club and various other youth organizations. He founded the Eastside Association, which enabled more than 500 youth to compete in sports while emphasizing academics and learning skills. Senator Polanco also helped to establish the Arroyo Vista Family Health Center, which offers quality health care with fees based on a patient's ability to pay, the Mujeres Recovery Home, a battered women's shelter and Para Los Ninos Day Care Center. A native Californian, Senator Polanco grew up in East Los Angeles. He is a graduate of James A. Garfield High School, East Los Angeles College and furthered his studies at the University of Redlands and the Universidad de Mexico majoring in business administration.

Asifa Qurashi: Asifa Qurashi is a doctoral student at Harvard Law School, writing her S.J.D. thesis in comparative Islamic and American constitutional legal theory. She holds an LL.M. from Columbia Law School (focusing on federal habeas corpus law), a J.D. from U.C. Davis and a B.A. from U.C. Berkeley. She has held federal clerkships in the Ninth Circuit United States Court of Appeals and has published articles in the fields of Islamic and comparative law, including gender issues. Ms. Quraishi has served on the Board of Karamah: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights and the Muslim Women's League and is a founding member of MuslimJD, an organization for Muslim legal professionals. A new mother this year, Asifa Quraishi continues to be active in various American Muslim community activities that have been part of her life for many years.

Shani Nicole Rashid: Shani Rashid has been in the communications field for the past 13 years. She attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Maryland's Asian Division in Japan and completed the United States Department of Defense Information School programs of study in Public Affairs and in Broadcasting. She has worked for the U.S. Department of Defense, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership, Northeast Charlotte (NC) Enterprise Community as well as various freelance clients. She serves on the Board of Directors for Talent Link, a non-profit agency serving the entertainment industry and is a member MENSA, Toastmasters, International Association of Business Communicators, Women In Communications, Inc. and the

Muslim American Society's National Young Adult Association. Shani recently relocated from her hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina to Washington, DC, where she is now employed with Muslim Public Affairs Council.

Steven F. Rohde: Stephen F. Rohde is a constitutional lawyer, lecturer and writer. He is President of the ACLU of Southern California. He is co-author of *Foundation of Freedom*, published by the Constitution Rights Foundation and has written numerous articles and book reviews on civil liberties and constitution history. He is the author of a new book, *American Words of Freedom*, which explores the origins, history and meaning of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He is also a Vice President of the Beverly Hills Bar Association. Mr. Rohde received his B.A. degree in Political Science from Northwestern University in 1966 and his J.D. degree from Columbia Law School in 1969. He is senior partner with the law firm of Rohde & Victoroff in Century City, specializing in communications, media, intellectual property and constitutional law.

Omar S. Ricci: Omar Ricci is a board member and spokesperson for the Muslim Public Affairs Council. He has been active with the organization since its founding in the late 1980's. Mr. Ricci is also an active member of the Islamic Center of Southern California, an institution in Los Angeles that opened its doors over 35 years ago. He is a former board member of the mosque and currently acts as a mentor in its youth group program. Mr. Ricci is also a small business owner and partner. His firm provides software to investment management companies for asset management, trading, pricing, and other related functions of such firms. Born in New York City in 1968, Mr. Ricci lives in the Los Angeles area and is married with two daughters.

Congressman Ed Royce: Ed Royce (R) is in his fifth term in Congress representing California's 39th District. Ed and his wife Marie live in Fullerton, CA. Since his election to the U. S. House of Representatives in 1992, Mr. Royce has labored to shift power out of Washington. He has earned a reputation for his efforts to eliminate wasteful government spending, provide tax relief, and streamline regulations. He has earned the highest rating in the House from Citizens Against Government Waste and Royce was appointed Assistant Whip for the 107th Congress by Republican Whip Tom DeLay. Mr. Royce serves on the House International Relations Committee as chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, and as a member of the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific. In addition, Royce serves on the House Financial Services Committee as a member of the Subcommittees on Capital Markets, Insurance and Government Sponsored Enterprises; Domestic Monetary Policy, Technology and Economic Growth; and Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit. A California native, Mr. Royce is a graduate of California State University, Fullerton, School of Business Administration. A former controller and capital projects manager, Royce served as corporate tax manager for a Southern California company prior to entering public service as a state senator in 1982. He and Marie also owned their own business.

Dr. Agha Saeed: Mr. Agha Saeed is the founder of the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council, composed of four major Muslim political organizations involved in American politics. Mr. Saeed is also the founder of the American Muslim Alliance, a major American Muslim grassroots organization promoting American Muslim participation in politics across party lines. Mr. Saeed is also a professor of ethnic studies and political science at the University of California, Berkeley, and California State University, Hayward.

Bassam Sharif: Born in Nablus, Palestine, Mr. Sharif has been active with the Muslim community and MPAC for many years. Mr. Sharif holds a B.A. from Washington State, a M.A. from Michigan State University in Construction Engineering, and an M.B.A. from Claremont College. He works as a Civil Engineer and Real Estate developer at IDS Investment Development Service. Since 1998, Mr. Sharif has been a board member at MPAC. And since coming to Los Angeles in 1984, has been an active member of the Islamic Center of Southern California. He was also a member of the General Union of Palestinian Students, an international Palestinian Organization. Mr. Sharif lives in Los Angeles with his wife Dimah and three children.

Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi: Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi was born in India, where he received his early education. He later graduated from the Islamic University of Madinah in 1965 with an advanced degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies. He received his M.A. in Theology from Birmingham University in England and a Ph.D. in Comparative Religion from Harvard University. Dr. Siddiqi was the Chairman of the religious affairs committee of the Muslim Students Association in the United States and Canada, Chairman of the Department of Religious Affairs at the Muslim World League office of the United Nations. He has also served as the Director of the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C, and currently serves as the Director of the Islamic Society of Orange County and is a past president of the Islamic Society of North America, one of the largest grassroots Muslim organizations in North America.

Grace Tapia: Ms. Tapia works at *The Minaret* magazine handling subscriptions, and volunteers with the Muslim Public Affairs Council. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband Alfredo Tapia and their two sons, Alfredo Jr. and Alejandro.

Tarik Trad: Born and raised in Southern California, Mr. Trad has been an MPAC Board Member since 1994, serving as Secretary of the Board since 1998. In addition, he is a contributing writer, designer and Board Member of *The Minaret* magazine. Mr. Trad has been part of the Islamic Center of Southern California since 1975, active as both a Youth Group member and a Sunday School teacher. Professionally, he has a background in Graphic Designer and Marketing Manager for several large companies, currently serving in the role as Corporate Manager of Advertising and Branding for a major defense contractor. He is married to Dalia Trad with two sons, Yusef and Omar.

Ron Wakabayashi: Mr. Wakabayashi is the former Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission and is currently working in the community affairs division of the Department of Justice in the West Coast Region. Mr. Wakabayashi has worked as a facilitator for issues of concern for the American Muslim Community to law enforcement.

Dr. Ebrahim Yazdie: Dr. Ebrahim Yazdi was born in Qazvin, Iran, during the rule of the government of Reza Pahlavi. He obtained his education at the University of Tehran in Iran and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he studied Cancer Biology, Chemotherapy, and Carcinogenicity. He was a member of the editorial board of the underground newspaper *Rah-e-Musaddiq* (Musaddiq's Path), the organ of the National Resistance Movement of Iran. In 1958, Dr. Yazdie was a founding member of the Islamic Medial Association. In America, Dr. Yazdie founded the U.S. branch of the Iranian National Front, and joined with Muslim students from various countries studying in the U.S. to form the Muslim Students' Association of the United States and Canada. While in the U.S. Dr. Yazdie was tried in absentia by the Shah's military court and sentenced to a 10 year prison term. Dr. Yazdie taught in Houston, where he founded the first mosque in Texas. In 1977, Dr. Yazdi was appointed by the Ayatollah Khomeini as the sole Iranian representative in the U.S. He served under Khomeni as the Deputy Prime Minister for Revolutionary Affairs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In 1979, when the U.S. embassy in Tehran was occupied by students and embassy staff taken hostage, the Provisional Government resigned. Since then, Dr. Yazdie has worked with others to correct what they saw as a perversion in the course of the revolution away from the principles of freedom, social justice, and the rule of law. In 1995, Dr. Yazdi was elected by the Iranian parliament as the new Secretary General. He has published numerous papers, essays and books on political, social, and religious issues.

Hassan Zeenni: Mr. Hassan Zeenni was born in Beirut, Lebanon, and has lived in the U.S. for 23 years. He received his B.A. from California State Los Angeles in Civil Engineering. Mr. Zeenni worked for two years as a Seismic Engineer at GV Engineering, and five years at RGA Construction serving as vice-president of the company. Since 1993, Mr. Zeenni has been an entrepreneur, running his own manufacturing company in Los Angeles. Mr. Zeenni has been actively involved in the Muslim community for several years, serving on the Board of MPAC as a Co-Vice chairman. Mr. Zeenni also gives *khutbas* (sermons) at mosques throughout Southern California