



The Joseph Interfaith Foundation

*United in a Vision for Truth*

## **Press Release**

### **Launch of the Council of Imams and Rabbis**

This statement is issued by the Council of Imams and Rabbis on its official launch on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010 at the Committee Room 3, House of Lords.

The Council is a group of leading Imams and Rabbis in London who have come together in an initiative of the Joseph Interfaith Foundation. They have been meeting regularly in private since January 2010.

The Council represents the Jewish and Muslim communities across their religious and ethnic diversity. The Imams are senior religious leaders of Sunni and Shi'a communities in London. The Rabbis are senior rabbis of major Orthodox, Reform, Masorti, and Liberal synagogues in London. They meet six times a year.

The Council is an authoritative theological and intellectual think-tank that will disseminate its views and decisions with authority and clarity to the grass roots members of both communities via their mosques and synagogues, and the government by meeting the Minister as and when necessary.

Members of the Council have come together for the sake of peace and understanding between their respective communities and to benefit from each other's counsel on matters of community cohesion.

Members of the Council wish to gain a better knowledge of each other's faith, history and worship, customs and traditions in order to reduce tension, strengthen cooperation, and educate their communities towards better understanding of both faiths.

The Council will challenge prejudice, myths and misconceptions which divide their communities. The members will also support each other on matters of mutual interest, expecting not an idealistic but a realistic outcome.

The Council will address not only what unites the two communities, but also what divides them. We acknowledge that there are divisions of opinion on some issues between the two communities. We neither deny nor disregard these issues, but address them openly and honestly, with view to understanding and resolving as much of them as possible, but also realising that some disagreements may remain for the time being.



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**Notes for Editors:**

The Foundation is an officially registered joint Muslim-Jewish interfaith organisation that is committed to fostering engagement through a constructive and realistic dialogue between the Muslim and Jewish communities in Britain and abroad. The Foundation also aims to promote a deeper understanding of both faiths among the general public. The Council of Imams and Rabbis is a pioneering initiative of the Joseph Interfaith Foundation.

We aim to extend the Council nationally by inviting senior Imams and Rabbis from other major mosques and synagogues to join the Council.

The Council of Imams and Rabbis will continue its work under the umbrella of the Joseph Interfaith Foundation.

[www.josephinterfaithfoundation.org](http://www.josephinterfaithfoundation.org)

The Trustees of the Foundation congratulate the imams and rabbis for their vision, commitment and courageous decision to make the Council of Imams and Rabbis an effective and constructive reality. We wish you continued success in this pioneering initiative.

**Trustees of the Joseph Interfaith Foundation**

**Lord Nazir Ahmed of Rotherham**

**Baroness Julia Neuberger**

**Sir David Michels**

**Professor Mona Siddiqui**

**Attending the launch is by private invitation from the Joseph Interfaith Foundation only**

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