



11th November 2005

Forward Planning

What: Launch of Islam Awareness Week

Where: London City Hall

When: 21st November 2005

Islam and Britain can live together, history tells us!

'Past and Present: One thousand years of Islam in Britain', sets the theme for this year's Islam Awareness Week. Set to fly in the face of overtones that smack of conflict, hostility and eternal standoffs, this theme will allow history to speak for itself.

In its twelfth year running, Islam Awareness Week 2005 comes in the tragic aftermath of the July 7th bombings. "This makes it even more essential for us to show that Islam and Britain have a shared history, and to show solidarity with the people of London", emphasised Shafeeq Sadiq, National Coordinator of Islam Awareness Week.

This year, Islam Awareness Week will tell the tale of two peoples as never told before. The Islam and Britain you never knew. Knowing that we live in a climate in which misunderstandings and hostility are all too common, this year's theme will be a critical unearthing of our historical truths in order to carve a new public consciousness, one of commonality and inter-dependence. It will tell a story of kings and paupers, of soldiers and sailors, of alchemists and anatomists and of mosques and universities. The story will be one of interchange, of dialogue, of political alliances and of friendships from across continents and cultures. Above all it will tell the tale of interplay between Islam and Britain, of ordinary men and women here in Britain, of communities shaping themselves and of revolutionary ideas that shaped the Britain we have today. Today's Britain would be very different without Islam!

The week will be launched by the Mayor of London, **Ken Livingstone**, with other important dignitaries also speaking at the event, including: **Professor Nabil Matar** a specialist in British and Muslim History, **Iqbal Sacranie**, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain and **Dr Munir Ahmed**, President of the Islamic Society of Britain. In order to mark the week a **specially commissioned booklet** on the history of Islam and the British Isles will be launched. The week will also see the launch of the 'Tent for Peace' by the Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and the launch of the third of a trilogy of books by Professor Nabil Matar on interaction between Muslims and the British Isles.

Islam Awareness Week is a pro-active initiative that seeks to help Muslims and non-Muslims to come together in a climate of understanding and appreciation. In its twelfth year, IAW can now boast hundreds of local events across the country organised by Muslims and non-Muslims, all building bridges of understanding across communities.

[Ends]

Notes to Editors

1. The Press Office will be happy to assist in developing local angles and putting you in touch with local groups participating in the project or any inquiries about covering these events.
2. For media enquiries please contact the Press Officer on: 07092 359 611, email: admin@iaw.org.uk.
3. Islam Awareness Week runs from 21st - 27th November this year. This year's launch will be on Monday 21st November, in the City Hall, London.
4. Islam Awareness Week is a project of the Islamic Society of Britain (ISB), which is affiliated to the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB).
5. For further details please visit the IAW website: www.iaw.org.uk.
6. For details of the Tent for Peace please visit: www.shakespeares-globe.org. Nabil Matar is Professor of English and Department Head at Florida Institute of Technology; his latest book is titled, *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689*.